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WITH LORD ROBERTS
THROUGH THE KHYBER PASS

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Adventures in Geography Series

Editor: Robert Owen

42264

WITH LORD ROBERTS THROUGH
THE
KHYBER PASS

by

DAVID ENSOR

Illustrated by

HARRY TOOTHILL



FREDERICK MULLER LIMITED
LONDON

FIRST PUBLISHED BY FREDERICK MULLER LTD. IN 1963
PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY EBENEZER BAYLIS AND SON, LTD.
THE TRINITY PRESS, WORCESTER, AND LONDON
BOUND BY THE DORSETL PRESS LTD., HARLOW



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43264
17.9.1965
954.084/Ens

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to Mr. U. A. Ansari of the Office of the High Commissioner for Pakistan for his valuable help.

He has supplied me with much information and many facts concerning his country and has made available to me photographs some of which illustrate this book.

D. E.

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PART I

General Roberts Marches to Kabul

I

Early Days

ADVENTURE stories are always exciting, particularly if they are true. None have a greater interest than those which tell of the past exploits of famous British soldiers and sailors.

This is the story of one of the best known of all. A soldier whose name ranks with Wellington, Marlborough and Montgomery. A man who became a legend in his own lifetime and who was known to all by the affectionate nickname of "Bobs".

Earl Roberts of Kandahar, V.C., Knight of the Garter, was born in India in 1832, five years before Queen Victoria came to the throne. He arrived into the world as plain Frederick Roberts, the son of General Sir Abraham Roberts. After school in England he joined the Indian Army in 1851. When he died, just after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, he was one of Britain's greatest soldiers. Certainly the greatest since the Duke of Wellington.

At the age of nineteen he was showing signs of

remarkable intelligence and ability which were to make him the pride of his country in years to come. But like many famous men, of whom perhaps Napoleon is the greatest example, he was physically small and not very strong. He was slightly built and was what would perhaps today be called neat and dapper, with fair hair and blue eyes. His outward appearance concealed a relentless will, a tremendous brain and the mind of a man who was to become a tough and brilliant soldier.

Queen Victoria had come to the throne in 1837 at a period of history when Britain's prestige was low. A new lead was required if Britain was to regain her power and influence in the world, and Frederick Roberts was one of the men who did much to do this. Without being a prig he was a good man in every sense of the word. He was also as brave as a lion, as was shown by his intrepid behaviour at the relief of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny when he won the Victoria Cross.

In 1852 he set sail from Southampton in the steamship *Ripon*, bound for India. This journey was an adventure in itself, for transport and communications were slow and difficult. It was these problems which made such hard work for Britain's merchant adventurers, soldiers and sailors. A far-off land could be captured and the native population subdued, but it was extremely hard to carry on the government of a country thousands of miles away from England.

Nowadays, with rapid travel, radio and telephone communications, it is easy to understand the difficulties and problems of the man on the spot. It is

also very much easier to understand the problems of other peoples who have a completely different way of life from our own.

Britain has always been fortunate in producing great men of adventurous spirit. The colonization of the world and the building up of a great Empire started in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Tough, adventurous men like Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher and Raleigh did much to support and increase the Dominions of the great Queen. Frederick Roberts was a worthy follower in the steps of these men.

By 1878, when Queen Victoria had been on the throne forty years, this country was fortunate in having many strong men serving the Crown. Not the least of them being Frederick Roberts.

The Indian sub-continent had been colonized centuries before. The Portuguese reached Southern India in 1498. They were followed by the French and the British. Ultimately the whole sub-continent was conquered by the British and the East India Company was founded in 1600 as a large commercial and trading organization. It administered India as a whole, maintaining its own army, and was very powerful both commercially and politically.

When Roberts sailed from Southampton the whole country had been under the control of the East India Company for over a hundred years. It was a considerable journey of many months, with the probability that it would be at least ten years before he saw England again, and then only if he was fortunate enough to survive the various diseases which were

responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Europeans every year.

Like communications and travel, hygiene and medical knowledge were in their infancy. Very little was known about the terrible tropical diseases which are carried by unclean food and water and by parasites and flies. England had advanced certainly from the days of the great plague in the reign of Charles II, but medical knowledge was primitive even at home in those days and in India practically non-existent. It was about fifty years before the young Roberts went to India that precautions such as vaccination had been practised in Britain for the first time.

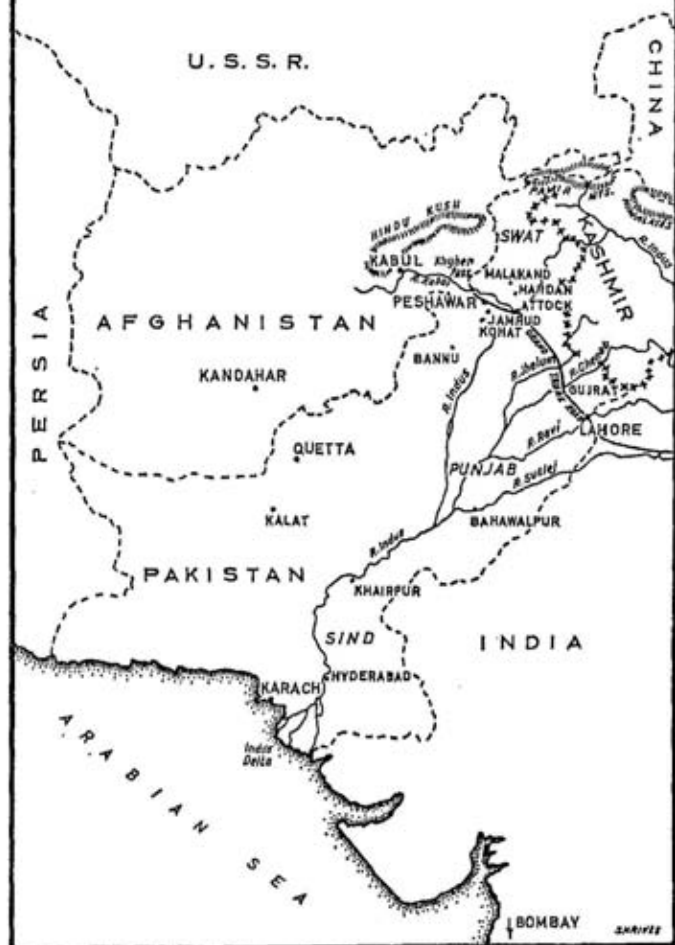
During the early part of Roberts' service in India there had been continuous trouble. Discontent was rife, rioting was frequent and there was some considerable mismanagement in the government of the country by the East India Company.

All these troubles ultimately flared up into the tragedy of the Indian Mutiny. During that dreadful time tens of thousands of people, including women and children of both races, were killed and there was much distress.

As a result of these troubles the British Crown took over directly the government of India and thereafter the East India Company ceased to have any political responsibility. A Governor-General or Viceroy was appointed as the representative of the Sovereign and a few years later the whole sub-continent became known as the British Indian Empire.

After the mutiny Frederick Roberts's rise in his profession was rapid. He held a number of Staff

WITH LORD ROBERTS THROUGH
THE KHYBER PASS



Map of the area, from Persia across to India

appointments in the Indian Army. He travelled far and took part in the Abyssinian and Burma campaigns.

In 1873 his father, General Sir Abraham Roberts, had died at the age of ninety. He had not lived to see his son promoted to Major-General, which he attained in 1878. In that year Frederick, with a fine reputation, had already seen a great deal of active service in that area of India which was known as the North-West Frontier. His work kept him in Delhi or Simla, but it looked as if there would be trouble with Afghanistan and it was not long before General Roberts led an army upon one of the most famous marches in history. A march that was to take him from Delhi to Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. A march through some of the most famous country in the world, through the towns of Lahore, Jhelum, Attock and Peshawar, right to the entrance of the dreaded Khyber Pass.

Why was this journey necessary? The reasons are a matter of history. The British Empire had been quarrelling for some years with Russia, and Afghanistan was the principal reason for the argument.

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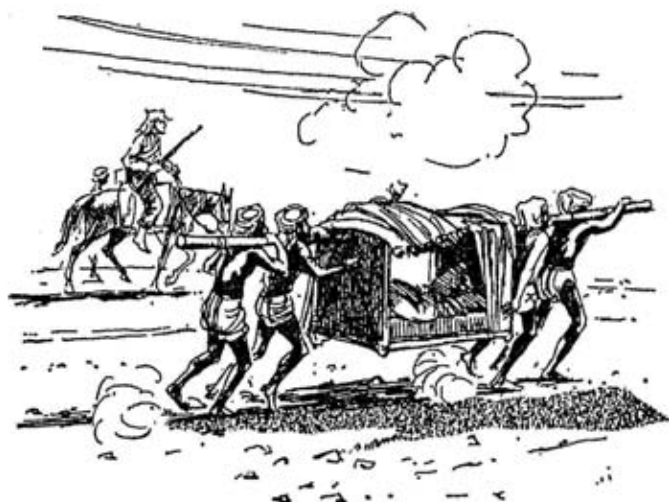
Queen Victoria's India

WHEN Frederick Roberts arrived in India in 1852 travel was slow and tedious. It wasn't a great deal better in 1878 when one of his first journeys was made from Meerut, a town some miles south of Delhi, to Peshawar, the well-known garrison town at the entrance to the Khyber Pass in the old North-West Frontier Province. Young Roberts described the journey, which was so uncomfortable that it is difficult to imagine it today, as follows:

"Starting after dinner the victim was carried throughout the night by eight men divided into parties of four. He was carried in a *dooly*, which was a sort of stretcher with a tent over it. The eight men were changed at stages of every ten miles or so. The baggage was also conveyed by coolies who kept up an incessant chatter, while the procession was lighted on its way by a torch bearer. The torch was made of bits of rag tied on the end of a stick and was continually dipped into a bowl of very smelly oil. If the carriers were very good the progress was about three miles an hour. If there were no delays forty odd miles could frequently be achieved before it was necessary

to seek shelter from the sun." It must have been a very uncomfortable way of travelling!

In those days the Government provided rest houses at intervals along the main routes. Such places consisted of primitive bungalows, but a bath could be obtained and a wash was pretty urgently required after a journey of many hours along a very dusty road.



A dooly for carrying travellers

Food was also obtainable from the Indian in charge of the bungalow, but this was extremely primitive and the risk in those days of food poisoning was considerable.

Nevertheless young Roberts achieved this tedious journey safely and arrived at Peshawar to greet his father who was then commanding the troops in the district. It was from his father that Roberts got to

know and understand the people and tribes of the North-West Frontier including the Afghans. It was obvious to the young officer that here was a problem which went far beyond the boundaries of the Indian Empire and was very much bound up with the world political situation at that time.

Within the boundaries of the old Indian Empire was a vast population of hundreds of millions of people of different sects, tribes, communities and religions. There were over four hundred languages and dialects spoken. Generally speaking it would be accurate to describe the population as being divided into two-thirds Hindu and one-third Moslem. Apart from the two main races there were a number of minorities both of religion and race. Such as the Christians, the Parsees, the Sikhs and others. Of the two main groups the Moslems, or Mohammedans, followers of the Prophet Mohammed, had originally come from Persia and Arabia into India. They had come through the Khyber Pass and were tough, virile, strong and intelligent. They tended to remain in the north and west of the Indian sub-continent, although by the beginning of the twentieth century many of them had moved east into the Province of Bengal. The Hindus on the other hand were generally to be found further south. They were not as strong or as virile as the Moslems and their physical make-up can, to some extent, be accounted for by the differences in climate.

In the areas inhabited by the Moslems there are sharp differences of temperature; very hot in summer, very cold in the winter. While the Hindu areas

suffer from a severe tropical and enervating heat all the year round.

In the North-West Frontier Province the population was almost entirely Moslem and inhabited principally by a race known as the Pathans, whose language was Pushtu. And Peshawar was the limit and extent of British territory. In and around the Khyber Mountains and Pass was a sort of no man's land between the British territory and Afghanistan. Here lived wild and warlike tribes, who were continually doing battle hopefully against the British, although the Afghans came in for their share as well. When not actually fighting, much of their time would be spent in organized raids into British territory for the purposes of cattle stealing.

For many years the Khyber Pass was one of the most dangerous places in the world and many lives were lost every year. The Pathans and other warlike tribes in the vicinity were bold, resolute and daring. They could see in the dark and move like cats. Their aim with a rifle was uncanny and they were brought up on every sort of warlike adventure. If they didn't use the rifle then it was their great double-bladed knife. And frequently they could remove the rifle from under a sleeping soldier without waking him. If they couldn't steal rifles then they were experts at making a primitive type in illegal factories in the eyries and caves in the depths of the pass. From these hideouts they had to be winkled out every so often by small-scale military expeditions led by British officers, so that there might be some peace and security in the area. What had, however, been for

years a thorn in the flesh of Britain was the attitude of Afghanistan and its King, or Amir. It was this which led to war and was the reason for the march of General Roberts to Kabul.

Before we start our travels with the General let us see what all the trouble was about. Take another look at the map and you will see that Afghanistan lies between Russia and what was then the Indian Empire. The distance between the frontiers of these two great areas had originally been several thousands of miles, but gradually as the result of various actions of these two great powers, Russia and India had got closer together, until 1878 when they were only separated by the breadth of Afghanistan which was then some four hundred miles.

The Amir of Afghanistan, Shir Ali, was desperately anxious about the independence of his country. He was an astute but despotic ruler and he felt that in order to ensure his own and his country's safety he would have to throw in his lot with one or other of the great powers on his borders.

For various reasons he was inclined to favour the cause of Britain. But unfortunately for many years we had shown no signs of friendliness. We considered him unreliable and our policy towards him had been very vague. Eventually he became angry at the British attitude and started to negotiate with the Russians. Proposals and suggestions dragged on for many months and a series of incidents took place culminating with the massacre of the British Representative and his staff at the Residency in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. A number of atrocities were

committed and the government of India, backed, of course, by the British Government decided to put an end once and for all to the insults and indignities. They felt that the situation in the North-West Frontier Province must be clarified, and the Afghans and marauding tribes taught a lesson which would instil into them once more a respect for the might of Britain.

General Roberts was placed in command of the troops and received his orders to march. He left Delhi with five thousand men. A message was sent to the Amir that a British force was on its way to avenge the murder of the British Representatives and to restore order.

As there was insufficient transport the army could not advance as a whole, but only sections at a time, and as it was September the General knew further delay was dangerous. Winter in those areas was rapidly approaching and snow might well add to the many existing difficulties.

Once again look at the map so that we can see the direction the General took, and the area generally and the towns through which he led his army.

The great road stretching from Delhi to Peshawar is known as the Grand Trunk Road. When General Roberts and his soldiers marched along it it had been for years a well-established road developed over the centuries from the old trading routes.

The routes had connected the east and west. Traders had come from the Mediterranean countries through the Khyber Pass to India, Burma and China, and the Chinese had taken their silks, silverware and

porcelain to the west along the same route. The original traders had travelled by donkey, by camel or on foot and throughout the centuries the route had become well known. It was the commonsense route, for it followed the valleys, the passes between the mountains and the banks of the rivers. When there were no more rivers to follow the travellers set out across the dreary, desolate plains and deserts facing hundreds of miles of rock and sand, where the only vegetation was patches of coarse grass and a rough plant called camel scrub.

For travellers there are two necessities of life which must be available. No man can exist without food and water. Food can be carried; but water, in those far-off days when General Roberts was marching, could not be carried in great quantities. It was, therefore, only natural that the original routes followed the sources of water.

Don't imagine there were any taps and don't think that the water supply consisted of pure, pleasant cooling streams, such as can be seen in the English countryside. The traveller would travel many miles before he arrived at a pond or tank as they are called in the area. These consisted of a small quantity of dirty water infested with bugs, flies and other insects.

The travellers of hundreds of years ago, the men with their camel caravans, were used to such conditions, but when British soldiers were operating in these areas the disease risks were enormous. It was frequently fatal to drink *any* water!

Eighty years ago hygiene was primitive and when General Roberts commenced his march he knew he

had to face a tough and cunning enemy. He also knew that until he reached his objective he would be passing through areas in which many hostile tribes were active and above all he had the grave problem of keeping his troops healthy. It would be no picnic, it was going to be tough going every mile of the way.

3

Lahore and the Grand Trunk Road

WHEN General Roberts and his army reached Lahore it was the first city of any size on their journey. Lahore is in the Punjab and on the route to what was, in those days, known as the North-West Frontier Province. The area through which they marched reached up to the Himalayan foothills and the Pamir mountains in the north. The North-West Frontier Province is separated from Russia by a narrow stretch of mountain ranges and it adjoins Iran and Afghanistan on the west and north-west. It is a land of scenic contrasts, from Lahore to Peshawar there are vast areas which are rugged, mountainous and desolate. Nevertheless throughout the area there are fertile tracts watered and irrigated from the great Indus river and its tributaries which rise far away to the north. The Indus ultimately finds its way into the Arabian Sea at Karachi.

The whole area has for centuries been a battlefield. Invasion after invasion has come through the Khyber Pass. Men of different races and civilizations have fought here with the result that the people met by General Roberts were frequently of composite stock and often of Aryan extraction.

Around Lahore the Punjabis spoke Urdu with a smattering of English and not until the army met the wild tribes nearer to the Khyber did they hear the Pushtu of the Pathans.

The army had started marching from Delhi. They were on foot and on horse-back, with the baggage and supplies carried in waggons and with the mountain artillery on pack mules. About a third were British soldiers, the rest were made up of various units of the Indian Army—infantry, cavalry, engineers and artillery—with, of course, the usual supply and medical units, which have from time immemorial been attached to an army.

Progress was slow. Camps had to be pitched every night; food brought up and cooked; guards and sentries set as a protection against marauders. And there was always the problem of water. If the camp was not near a stream or river then the old water holes had to be relied upon and unless this water could be boiled it was probable that before long an entire army would be lost. Then the animals had to be fed and watered and according to the season there was the menace of tropical heat.

In those days the British soldier marched in full uniform with a tight-necked collar to his tunic. He also carried all his equipment. It is, perhaps, surprising that so many of them survived.

What must be understood in the story of this march is that the army was spread over a very wide area. Indeed, when it reached the tribal frontiers of Afghanistan, some crossed through the Kurram Pass, while others travelled along the Khyber.

Lahore, the capital city of the Province of Punjab, is today the capital of West Pakistan. Its origin is lost in obscurity. However, in the year 1022 the first Moslem conquest of the area took place by Mahmud and Lahore became a town of considerable importance and a great cultural centre.

As the Moslem conquest extended Lahore remained a strategic outpost and rapidly became an important point for trading between east and west. In further battles the city was captured by the Moguls in 1524 and then it was that its fame as a city of learning, culture and fine buildings really commenced. The Emperor Akbar was responsible for its greatness. He built the famous Fort and a new city arose with fine walls and gateways, one of which still bears his name. He provided the city with many beautiful gardens and its busy market first came into being at this time. It was also a period of great religious tolerance. For the first time Christian missionaries appeared in the area and a Christian church was built.

When the Mogul Empire broke up the whole of the Punjab came under the control of the Sikhs, who are a Hindu community, and Lahore was occupied by them in 1764 and became the capital of their kingdom. Only a year or two before the young officer, Frederick Roberts, arrived in India the British had beaten the Sikhs in a great battle at Gujrat and annexed the whole area.

When General Roberts reached Lahore it was a city of some three-quarters of a million people. It stood on the river Ravi seven hundred feet above sea

level and during the early months of the year was comparatively cool. The mean temperature in February was about sixty degrees. On the other hand it was extremely hot in summer. There was no water shortage, with the result that all vegetation grew at a tremendous rate and fruit and vegetables came quickly to maturity.

Let us pause for a moment and look at some of the sights which the soldiers would have seen as they passed through the city eighty years ago.

The Shalimar gardens are famous throughout the East. Terraced and walled, with canals and pavilions, they were built by the Mogul emperors. They occupy an area of some forty acres and were commenced in the reign of the Emperor Shah Jehan in 1640. At the same time a canal was built to irrigate them, water being brought from over a hundred miles away. Although still very beautiful the gardens suffered considerably over the centuries. Robbers and marauding tribesmen stole much of the marble and red stone.

Two of the great historical monuments which would have been seen by General Roberts were the Badshahi Mosque and the Fort.

The Mosque was built about 1670. It is one of the largest in the world. It is of magnificent workmanship and built of red sandstone inlaid with white marble in flower patterns. There is a vast courtyard, a prayer chamber and four majestic minarets rising to a height of some hundred and forty feet. The roof of the prayer chamber is surmounted by three domes of white marble crowned with spires of burnished brass.

The Fort is situated to the north-west of the city and is very old. Its origin is doubtful, but it is mentioned in 1100 and was sacked and destroyed by the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century. It was rebuilt on several occasions until finally finished by the Emperor Akbar in 1560. Since then it has been added to, improved and restored on many occasions.

Apart from the gardens and monuments the soldiers would also have seen what, in those days, was a typical Indian city. The area was large and rambling, in the centre of which were the principal government buildings. The streets were mean and narrow, and the soldiers might well have got the impression there was some form of holiday or celebration. The streets would be packed with people. Cattle, goats, dogs and chickens would be running in and out of the shops and houses. The filth and smell would be indescribable. Most of the people were poorly dressed and under-nourished and everywhere the inevitable crowd of deformed beggars clamouring for alms. Flies, insects, bugs and mosquitoes were everywhere. In a back street a man might be leading an elderly woman by a chain attached to a metal collar round her neck. This would by any standards be a very extraordinary sight, but it must be remembered that up to comparatively recent times the status of women in Eastern countries was very low.

Less than fifty years ago India had a practice called *suttee* which required a woman on the death of her husband to be put to death by burning. In every aspect of life women were subordinate to men.

Girl children were of no consequence and the whole emphasis of life was on the predominance of the male. That is why on occasions instances of a man exercising his supposed superiority over his wife were seen. The collar and lead were exceptional, but they did occur. Fortunately, such horrible practices have disappeared.

Overcrowding was dreadful and all round there were signs of disease. Animals were born in the streets and died there. But with it all the population had a toughness and spirit which showed clearly that perhaps one day things might be better.

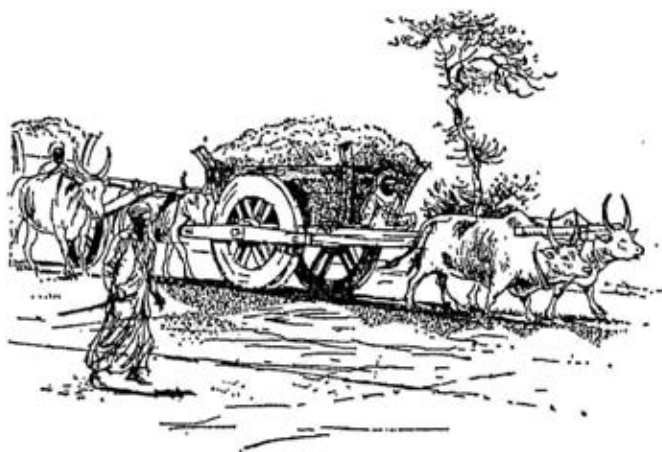
As the soldiers marched on they saw a vast teeming population, a myriad of smells, the shouting and screaming of bullock cart drivers, the clanking of old and decrepit carts, with here and there a well-dressed European driving past in a horse-drawn gharry.

General Roberts knew that before his army had marched many miles he would be in the middle of the great desolate area of the north-west. Nevertheless, before reaching that place, he and his men would pass through the part of the Punjab which surrounds Lahore and which has been known for centuries as the garden of India.

Before reaching Peshawar the army would cross five tributaries of the mighty river Indus. From these canals had been constructed to carry water into the arid wastes, thereby changing the character of the land's surface and saving the lives of the population. As a result of the water supplies which existed on the outskirts of the city, they had for long been able to

grow two important crops, wheat and cotton. For miles around the roads were cluttered with thousands of bullock carts carrying cotton fibre. Whilst on all sides there were great orchards growing oranges and lemons, with here and there a small village carrying on its agricultural work in the same way and with the same implements that had been used since mediaeval times.

As the army marched on, the fertile areas which



Bullock carts carrying cotton fibre

vary considerably in size were left behind. These areas altered from year to year, sometimes they were hundreds of thousands of acres and sometimes much less. It depended on the amount of water available and that in turn depended on the weather in the mountains where the rivers rose.

They now saw, for the first time since leaving the city, miles of bleak, uncultivated and desolate country interspersed occasionally with a small mud-hutted village. Whilst now and then a herd of goats would wander across the line of march.

Well on the road to Jhelum the army passed through a number of villages, all of which were similar in character.

The whole area was agricultural. The villagers were entirely dependent on what they could obtain from the land. In those days farming was very crude and inefficient. There was no method. No fertilization or rotation of crops and most of the implements were archaic. Many were made from wood and drawn by the inevitable white bullock. Such wells as there were had a primitive apparatus erected over them, with a rope attached to a bullock's yoke. The animal was led forward, the bucket came up the well and on arrival at the surface was tilted. The water poured out into a little hand-made canal which carried the liquid away on to the ground to be irrigated. The bullock was then pushed back until the bucket went down the well and the whole process was repeated. A slow, tedious and inefficient process, but there was nothing better.

The army approached a small village. It numbered some thirty or forty huts, the walls of which were made of mud and cow manure, the roofs of dried grass and leaves. In the middle of the village there were four small buildings built of brick, but they were decrepit and falling down through lack of repair. At the western end of the village was a low built wall

of outer layers of stone with the cavities filled with mud and rubbish.

Close by these small brick buildings was the village pond. During the day the majority of the men of the village were away in the surrounding country, they had to look after their cattle and tend their fields. The



Bullocks drawing a wooden plough

pond was roughly twenty-five yards long by about fifteen yards wide and in it when the army arrived was a conglomeration of women, children, bullocks, water buffaloes and other animals. Children were paddling, some of the women were washing clothes, whilst others were drawing water in large metal bowls for drinking and other household purposes. Vermin

were everywhere and the edge of the pond was thick with flies and insects. This pond, however, was the only source of water for hundreds of human beings in the village.

What of the people who lived there? They were mainly Punjabis, Moslem by religion, generally of medium height, athletically inclined and with a high intelligence. For many years the men provided thousands of recruits for the Indian Army. They were fine soldiers, keen fighters, and wonderful horsemen. Indeed the area around Lahore was famous for many years for the horses and mules supplied to the army and for the racehorses that ran on the various tracks throughout the country.

But the General's army was not stopping in the village. It moved on a mile or two and set camp for the night in the plain. At that stage there were no problems of water, there had been ample supplies at Lahore.

The next move was along the road to Attock and, as it was autumn, the country had lost its parched, black and desolate look. There was colour and growth to be seen. There was also cloud in the sky and the ponds were full. But before the General had gone much further his army was to see another side of nature which had led to the destruction in the country of thousands of acres every year. A problem which we shall see later on exists today.

General Roberts and his army marched through the Punjab towards the North-West Frontier Province which they would enter when they arrived at Attock. On their right flank to the north-east was

Kashmir and to the far south was Baluchistan and Sind, a vast area; and, in those far off days, mediaeval in outlook, desolate and poverty stricken. To the north there were vast regions, rugged and mountainous. To the immediate south there were plains and fertile fields in the valleys of the river Indus, the mighty river whose source is in the Himalayas and which flows down to the Arabian Sea.

The Indus has four main tributaries, all of which also have their sources in the great mountains. There is the Sutlej, which lies to the south and east of Lahore. The Ravi, upon which Lahore stands. The Chenab which passes through Gujrat and the Jhelum which flows between the main river and the Chenab.

The presence of these rivers is responsible for the fertility of the land in the Punjab and the area is known as the Land of the Five Rivers. Like many other countries in Asia the supply of water is dependent upon something other than rivers. For most of the year there is no rainfall and it is upon the monsoon rains that the country depends, not only for water on the land, but for replenishing the streams and rivers. The time of the monsoon rains depends upon the location of the areas and where General Roberts and his men were marching the rain would normally arrive about September and the whole of the parched land would then be revitalized.

What, however, had always been a problem was that the earth in that particular area was very salt. In those days methods of drainage and irrigation were so primitive and inefficient that when the

monsoon rains came vast areas would be flooded. With no drainage worth mentioning, these areas would remain waterlogged and sodden, whilst other areas in which there was some natural drainage would dry out very quickly immediately the rain had ceased. The result was that every year hundreds of thousands of acres passed out of cultivation because the ground was permanently waterlogged or contained too high a concentration of salt for anything to grow. It was a problem which eighty years ago was incapable of solution and was one of the reasons for the general poverty of the whole area.

As the army marched on they passed through vast desolate tracts of scrub and mountainous waste, interspersed at irregular intervals with small fertile patches which had been brought under cultivation only by the massive efforts of the local inhabitants. But they were incapable of dealing with these two great problems of nature, and from time to time whole villages would have to move in an attempt to find another area free from salt and flooding in which they could try to make a living. With an army on the march in such a region there could never be any question of living off the land. There was hardly enough in the land to nourish the local people, let alone feed five thousand men.

When the government of India came under the British Crown, garrison stations were built throughout the entire sub-continent. General Roberts would have been able to replenish his supplies at Lahore, but then he had to march many miles before reaching the next source of supply.

The line of his march took him through Gujrat and Jhelum and his army plodded on leaving Rawalpindi on their right. The land altered very little, because throughout the journey they had passed by and crossed the valleys of the tributaries of the Indus. Now they were approaching Attock, the gateway to the North-West Frontier itself, the town through which the mighty Indus flowed. Here the river Kabul joined the Indus which ran from the capital city of Kabul where, if all went well, General Roberts would end his march.

At Attock the army would rest and replenish its supplies, because from thenceforward the soldiers would be in a very different position. They would be entering a vast, bleak and hostile country where the majority of the inhabitants were far from friendly and where, indeed, at any moment, they might find themselves involved in battle. They now lay only a few miles from Peshawar and then they had to face the Khyber Pass and almost certainly the hostility of the Pathans and the climate.

It was not the first time that an army had passed through Attock on its way to Kabul. The great Mogul Emperor Akbar had built the Fort of Attock in 1581 after his battles with the Governor of Kabul. All round the Fort area were camping sites which had been used by troops throughout the centuries. Camps for the men who had fought on the frontiers with the tribesmen, the Afghans and others who had tried to force their way into the Indian sub-continent from the west. Not far away the Kabul river, muddy, and slow moving, wended its way towards the Indus.

About every half-mile the river was crossed by a ferry and numerous decrepit boats floated lazily down, stacked with fruit and vegetables for the villages downstream.

General Roberts and his men moved again and passed through Nowshera, a garrison town of importance, and soon they were within sight of Peshawar, the acknowledged chief city of the North-West Frontier and certainly the front door of the Khyber Pass.

Now General Roberts would be entering some of the wildest and most inhospitable country in the world. To the north are Malakand and Mardan while in front are the towering Khyber Mountains. Slightly behind the marching men and to the north-east are the mountains of Kashmir, standing out in all their beauty and leading the eye to the foothills of the Himalayas, those fabulous mountains which start their journey of thousands of miles along the northern frontier of the sub-continent and end at Darjeeling and the Assam border. But it is to the west that the army is marching and here is a sterile region of vast grey and brown mountains, with passes appearing like great cracks between the hills. Mostly uninhabited, the traveller will occasionally find an odd fertile patch or oasis where he might find the shade of a palm tree.

The only river in this area is the Kabul, which follows the line of the Khyber Pass itself. It was no doubt one of the reasons why this particular route became the favourite trading road.

On the road to Peshawar the army meets for the first time the Pathan tribesmen, clothed in long white flowing robes, with their white headdress and linen swathed round the *pugree* and falling like a long pig-tail down the back.

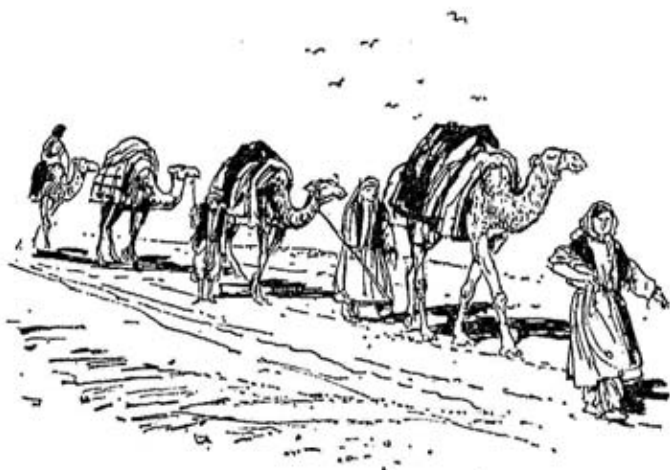


Pathan tribesmen

Miles and miles of rock, sand and camel scrub emphasized the occasional vegetation left after the monsoon rains. Herds of goats wandered up the mountain sides and down the valleys, whilst down the Trunk Road would pass the inevitable lines of bullock carts, with every now and again a camel convoy carrying merchandise from the plains of Persia

40 WITH ROBERTS THROUGH THE KHYBER PASS and Afghanistan to the merchants of Delhi, Agra and Bombay.

General Roberts was under no misapprehension. He knew as he approached the frontiers of Afghanistan he would meet with hostility both from the Afghans and the tribesmen, which would probably develop into open warfare. Before he reached



Camel convoy from Persia

Peshawar the General was also aware that the tribesmen were on the march. This meant an additional danger for there was no doubt they were being incited by the Afghan Government.

General Roberts was already short of transport and it was obvious that when he entered the Pass there would be considerable risk, because of the slow rate at which his army was moving. Moving an army

through a long and difficult pass can, of course, be disastrous if a strong and determined enemy occupy the hills on both sides. It was a situation General Roberts had to deal with before he could go on. It was a matter of extreme urgency.

4

The North-West and Peshawar

PESHAWAR is a city rich in history. Buddhist, Hindu, Pathan, Turk, Mogul, Sikh and the British have all left their mark at one time or another.

In General Roberts' day it was the capital of the North-West Frontier Province. Its importance had, for centuries, depended on its geographical location, for it commands the approaches to the Khyber through which thousands of men have passed, either as conquering armies, peaceful traders, or dissident tribesmen on the run.

Throughout history Peshawar had always been the key to the area. Whoever held Peshawar was able to ensure some peace and security. Eighty years ago tribal passions and feuds were intense, the tribes lived in the hills and living by looting was half the fun of life. Nevertheless they were a great nuisance and it had been the aim of many governments to subdue them. Over the years these efforts hadn't always been successful, but as various invaders came and went the Pathans remained and the whole frontier area became the happy hunting ground of these wild, virile and courageous people. Fighting was second nature to them and when they could be brought

under some form of civilization and discipline they made the greatest soldiers in the world.

In the boulder-strewn areas of scrub and desert little had altered over the centuries when General Roberts arrived. From the middle of the nineteenth



Peshawar commands the approaches to the Khyber Pass

century Peshawar and its immediate surroundings had improved considerably since the early centuries of the Christian era. In those days the city had the distinction of owning the begging bowl of Buddha and there was also a holy pipal tree whose branches were said to have once given shelter to the great man.

That there was a rich civilization in the past in Peshawar is clear. The evidence from archaeological remains, sculptures, paintings and coins which have been excavated in the city all tells a wonderful story. General Roberts could have seen in the museum some of the finest specimens of art in the world, comparable only to those of Greece and Egypt.

Again, by reason of its position, Peshawar has long been one of the largest trade centres for the products of central Asia. Merchants from Afghanistan, Swat, Chitral and other lands have for hundreds of years brought a great variety of goods by camel caravan, by donkey or bullock cart for sale in the city or for moving on into other parts of India and China.

General Roberts' soldiers could have gone into the bazaars, those fascinating parts of eastern cities where all the buying and selling is done. In such places a solid mass of humanity gossips, buys, sells and borrows money as well as getting involved in dubious deals. There the soldier would have seen rugs, carpets, sheepskins, Persian lambskins, crockery, gold thread and silks. Even in those days the British soldier could have afforded some of these goods. He wouldn't, of course, buy on this occasion for his officers had made it very clear that the future was going to be anything but comfortable!

Peshawar is a centre of great craftsmanship. The workmen with their skill make a variety of goods peculiar to that part of the world. There are Pathan sandals or *chaplis* as they are called. There are the stiff cap and turban, known as the *kullah* and the *lungi*. There are the embroidered shoes, or *jarai*;

there is the gold embroidery and lace work, the *gota* and *kinari*; and there is a tremendous amount of gold and silver work and pottery.

The area outside the city is mostly agricultural. As far north as Mardan the countryside has the advan-



The bazaar at Peshawar

tage of irrigation by the tributaries of the Kabul river, and the land was quite fertile and farming reasonably prosperous.

In the countryside could be seen crops of barley, maize, millet, oil seeds and sugar cane. Whilst on the northern outskirts there were areas of tobacco and

cotton. By the banks of the Bara river there was a very fine variety of rice growing, whilst in the gardens in the city itself, a variety of fruits were grown such as peaches, pomegranates, apricots, oranges, and lemons.

General Roberts' march to Kabul can be divided into two parts. The journey from Lahore to Peshawar was very different from the march which took his army through the Khyber Pass to the plains of Afghanistan. It was different from a military point of view, as indeed was the area through which they marched. The journey from Lahore had been a comparatively simple task even then. They were, of course, faced with the ordinary problems which soldiers have to compete with when they are on the march.

Basically those which faced General Roberts were the same which faced the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular War, the Duke of Marlborough in his battles in Europe and even Julius Caesar in his original march from Rome to Britain. It is all summed up in one word "supplies", and it doesn't matter very much whether the army consists of a few hundred or many thousands of men. However many there are, in whatever part of the world they are, and wherever they are marching, they must be provided with food and water.

There are also a number of other essentials such as medical supplies and shelter. Napoleon said, an army marches on its stomach. If you can't feed an army, defeat is certain, as the Emperor found out in his retreat from Moscow in 1812.

From Lahore to Peshawar General Roberts had been fortunate to move through that part of the old Punjab which was watered by the tributaries of the Indus as we have already seen. Because of the system of irrigation by canal much of the land he and his men passed through was fertile and there was always a reasonable supply of fairly clean water. Above all he was moving through an area which was comparatively friendly, or at least the inhabitants had been sufficiently subdued to prevent them becoming actively hostile. His army would march in a number of columns with advance guards out in front. A mile or two behind these patrols would be the main body of infantry and cavalry. Then the artillery and supply transport and behind would be the rearguard. Until they reached Peshawar they would have only a few scouting parties out on each flank. After they had left Peshawar and entered hostile tribal territory then they could expect attacks from all sides and the situation could be critical.

At the moment, however, the army was resting at Peshawar preparatory to moving off on the final stage. The troops bivouacked in camp. The climate was reasonable and at any moment the order would be given for them to go forward.

Let us now stop with them for a while and consider the area through which they have been marching and through which they were going to journey on to Kabul.

Eighty years ago the sub-continent of India could be divided into several physical regions. A glance at a map shows that in the north-west area the mountains

of the Hindu Kush, the Pamirs and other ranges meet in Afghanistan. The frontier between what was then British India, Russia and China was on the Pamir range and the glaciers from these mountains fed innumerable streams, few of which, however, ever reached the sea. But it is these glaciers which fill the valleys high up and keep full the river Indus and its tributaries. Because of that there is water and fertility in the plains even in the driest season. All the tributaries of the Indus carry a large amount of water in their upper reaches and it is because of the presence of this water that so many towns and villages are built on these great heights.

Kabul itself is seven thousand feet above sea level. But that doesn't prevent a large amount of vegetation growing and ripening in the hot sun. A great deal of the fertility of the Punjab between Lahore and Attock is due to the tributaries of the Indus carrying a lot of water in the early summer as the result of the melting snow in the mountains. This water brings down with it vast amounts of fertile alluvial soil extremely beneficial to plant growth, although it is also responsible in certain areas for the waterlogging and salt deposits.

Following along to the east from the Hindu Kush and Pamirs is the great mountain wall of the Himalayas. This great barrier, four miles high, nearly two hundred miles wide and over fifteen hundred miles long, is in this vast area lying on the right flank of General Roberts' army where all the rivers in the north-east rise.

As the army approached Peshawar they saw many kinds of life lived in these desolate mountain regions.

There are wandering shepherds driving their goats and sheep across the high valleys. High up in the mountains they pitch their skin tents and live in areas only free of snow for a week or two in summer. Then the land is gay with many-coloured flowers, the grass is green and there is water in the streams and lakes.

Lower down in the plains, where the army is marching, the area is more desert-like. The soil is poor and scanty. The valleys are narrower and the climate harsh and unfriendly. It is a region of arid mountain ridges, where in their rock camps the hostile tribesmen wait for an opportunity for battle and plunder.

In this area there are only two passes through which traffic can move into Afghanistan and the lands beyond. There is the Khyber which is guarded by Peshawar and the Kurram further to the south.

General Roberts had been in the area many times before and he knew the dangers. In fact quite recently he had led an army through the Kurram Pass and the reasons for his present march were closely connected with those of his previous journey. General Roberts was now marching on Kabul in order to avenge the murder of the British Representative and his staff at the Residency in that city. But British representation has been a source of contention between Afghanistan and Britain for many years. As we have already seen Shir Ali, the Amir of Afghanistan, was intriguing with the two great powers that lay on his frontiers, Russia and the British Empire. It was because of his craftiness and quarrels with his

family that his country was in a state of chaos for so many years. In 1863 he had fled from his capital to Kandahar and it was as a result of the direct intervention of the Viceroy of India, Sir John Lawrence, that had enabled him to regain his throne in Kabul.

But his rule remained uneasy, his eldest son was in rebellion against him and the old intrigues with Russia soon started again. The British government ordered the new Viceroy, Lord Lytton, to send a friendly mission to the Amir at Kabul in order to negotiate treaties of friendship, but principally to ensure that Afghanistan remained independent.

As the Viceroy said "the Amir of Afghanistan must choose which of his two powerful neighbours he will rely on. He must learn that if he does not prove himself our friend we shall be obliged to regard him as an enemy and treat him accordingly."

The Amir at first refused to accept a representative of the British government. But after months of negotiation the Amir agreed to send two of his ministers to meet the Viceroy's representative at Peshawar and agreed to the condition that British officers should live on the frontier.

Accordingly the British mission set off with the intention of meeting the Afghan representatives at the entrance to the Khyber Pass at Jamrud. When they got there it was only too clear to everyone that the British representatives would not be allowed to go any further. In fact the Amir's envoy told the British that he had been ordered to oppose their entrance into Afghanistan and if necessary use force. Once again the Amir had gone back on his word and

as the British officers reported to the Viceroy, nothing could have been more humiliating. On the other hand the Afghans said "the people say, and we think, the British will still do nothing".

This time the Afghans were wrong. They had pushed the British too far. The days of inaction were over and orders were given to the army to march. The forces were divided into three parts, the first of which was to march to Kandahar, a town in the southern region of Afghanistan. The second was to make its way through the Kurram Pass, defeat the Afghan army and march on to Kabul.

When the Viceroy nominated General Roberts to take command of the second force there was some criticism because many senior officers in India considered Roberts was too young and inexperienced. It was to be the last time that any such criticism was ever to be made against Frederick Roberts.

General Roberts arrived at his Command Headquarters thirty miles south of Peshawar and at once inspected his force. He never took anything for granted. Like all great army commanders he was concerned personally for the comfort of his troops. On this occasion he was particularly worried about his supply problem, the army's transport and the hospitals. He was also of the opinion that the army was too small for its task. Fortunately after a short delay he was given more men and better transport, but his supply problem was still difficult because everything had to be brought from Rawalpindi, over a hundred miles away, and the frontier was another sixty miles further on. This meant that his supplies

had to travel over two hundred miles on what were only poor, rough tracks through areas where the tribes were mostly hostile.

This, of course, meant that out of his small army a considerable number of men had to be detailed for guards and patrols.

The Kurram Pass through which the General and his army was to march ran for a little over sixty miles between mountains. The road was extremely bad. It followed roughly the line of the river bed and was cut every few yards by ravines or almost blocked with trees and tall, heavy grass. Throughout the march the river had to be crossed several times. The water was bitterly cold and there was a lot of frost at night. After marching for six days they had only advanced fifty miles. During the first few days General Roberts had relied on information as to the whereabouts of the enemy from tribesmen, but he soon found this unreliable, because as soon as he sent out his own scouting parties he found the enemy had not retreated, but had taken up strong positions on the side of the high mountain, the Peiwar Kotal. On the mountain were 18,000 men and from there, on the Afghan frontier, they could command not only the Pass itself, but the road beyond to Kabul.

It was during the ensuing battle that General Roberts learnt lessons of frontier warfare which he never forgot and which were so helpful later. By a brilliant encircling movement he utterly defeated the Afghan army. As he marched on Kabul the Afghans gave in and told the British authorities they were now prepared to accept the Mission in their capital. It was

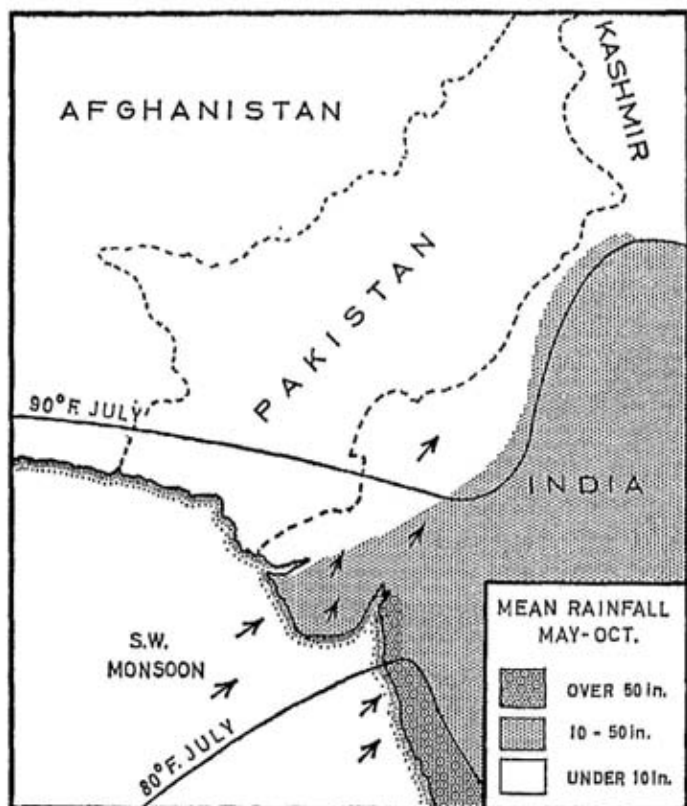
the disasters that followed further Afghan treachery which were the reasons why General Roberts was once again, within a very short time, marching towards Kabul.

This time he had a large army but he still needed some luck. Eighty years ago the luck of the weather was all important to an army on the march. Heat or wet made the difference between success or failure, but in winter time in the mountainous, desolate expanses of the Khyber Pass, there could be other hazards of snow, ice and frost.

The climate of the sub-continent is largely dependent upon its latitude, its very varied height and the seas which surround it. A large area lies within the tropics, but in the land of the North-West Frontier and certainly in the country through which General Roberts was marching the climate was quite different from that which would be found further south. There the winters are cool, there is occasional frost at night, whilst on the peaks of the mountains there is perpetual snow. On the other hand the summers can be extremely hot, although there are nothing like the hours of hot sunshine found further south.

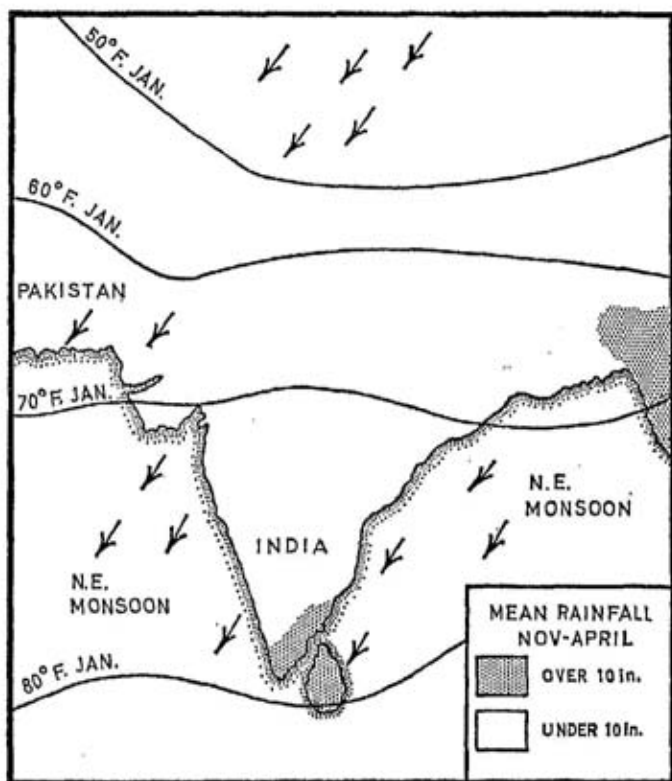
Nevertheless along the line of the Grand Trunk Road the winter temperature is frequently the same as that of an English summer, and in many areas of the Punjab corn will ripen in January. In lands such as these the country's economy must, of course, depend on the rainfall. Rain provides water to fill the rivers, to replenish the tanks and the ponds, and to provide life for the people, their animals and their plants.

Rainfall in these areas is dependent upon the monsoons, which are seasonal winds. In the summer the land in the north-west is extremely hot and the air



above is also hot and therefore light. Down in the south in the Indian Ocean the air is cooler and therefore heavier when it moves towards the sub-con-

continent and because of the rotation of the earth it comes in from the south-west. There is tremendous evaporation at this time of year, and because of that



these winds carry with them a vast quantity of water. As a result in the north-west, and indeed along the line of General Roberts' march, November to February is comparatively cool and dry. From March

to May the whole area is bone dry, arid and extremely hot, and only for a few weeks after May do the monsoon winds arrive to drop the essential water on the earth.

Because of the climate with its extraordinary variations it was essential for General Roberts to go through the Khyber to Kabul in the cool, dry period. He didn't want his army to face the appalling heat or to be washed away by the tropical storms when they could be knee deep in mud.

For centuries the climate of the Indian sub-continent has been one of the greatest problems of life. The heat is bad enough, but when added to that there has been a drought because the monsoons have failed, or floods caused by too much rain; then from time to time there have been dreadful famines. Heat and wet have also been responsible for many diseases carried by insects and pests.

When India was taken over by the British considerable efforts were made to regulate the water supplies and, by the time General Roberts had arrived in the country as a young officer, some primitive dams had been constructed. These did at least help to conserve the water in the lakes and reservoirs and only because of this had the agriculture of the country survived at all.

Because of the climate and the monsoon rains roads in this part had always been difficult to construct. Frequently they were simply beaten tracks which had been used over centuries by the camel and bullock caravans. This meant, of course, that they were thick with dust in the dry weather, and often



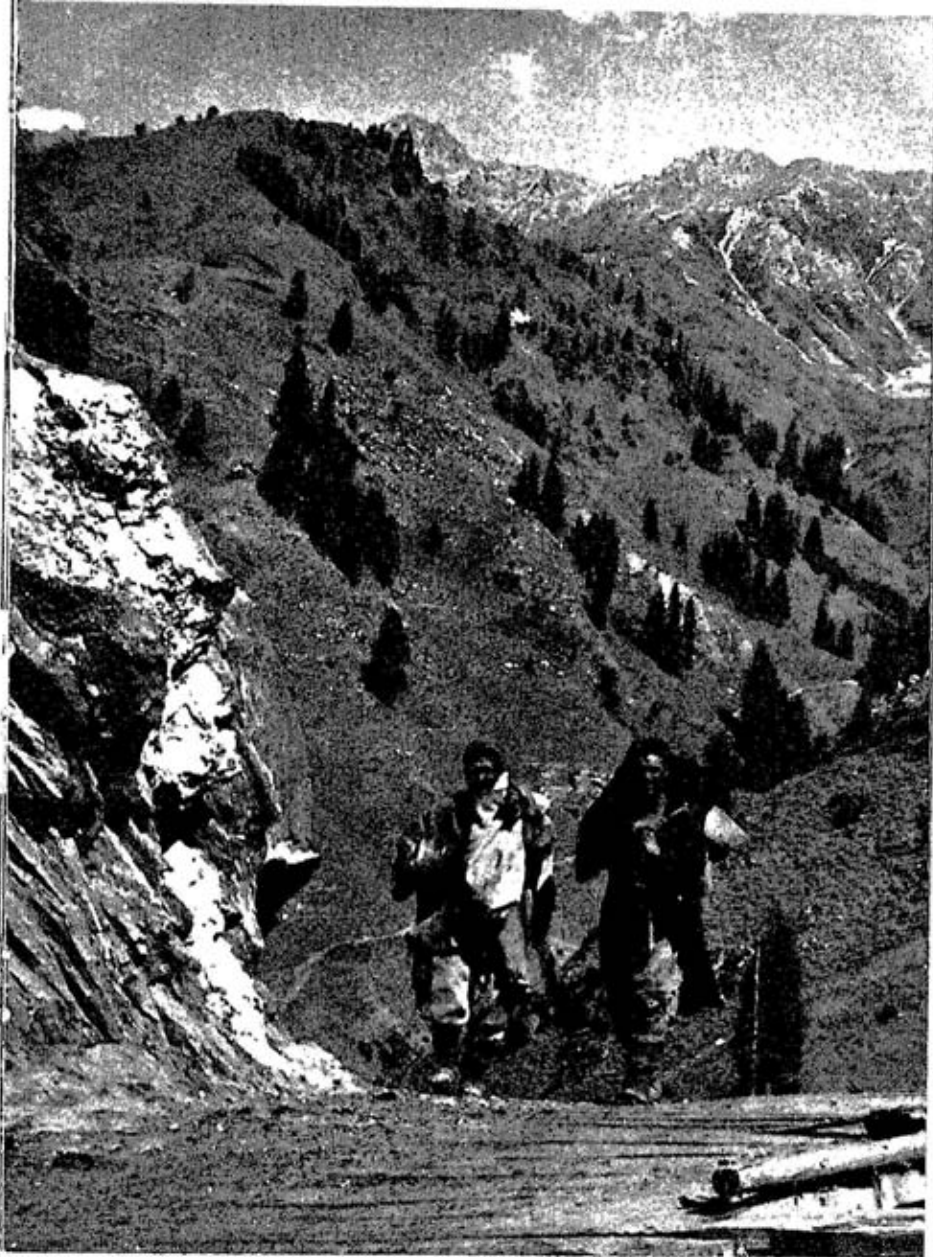
Preparing to advance. The Afghan War, 1878



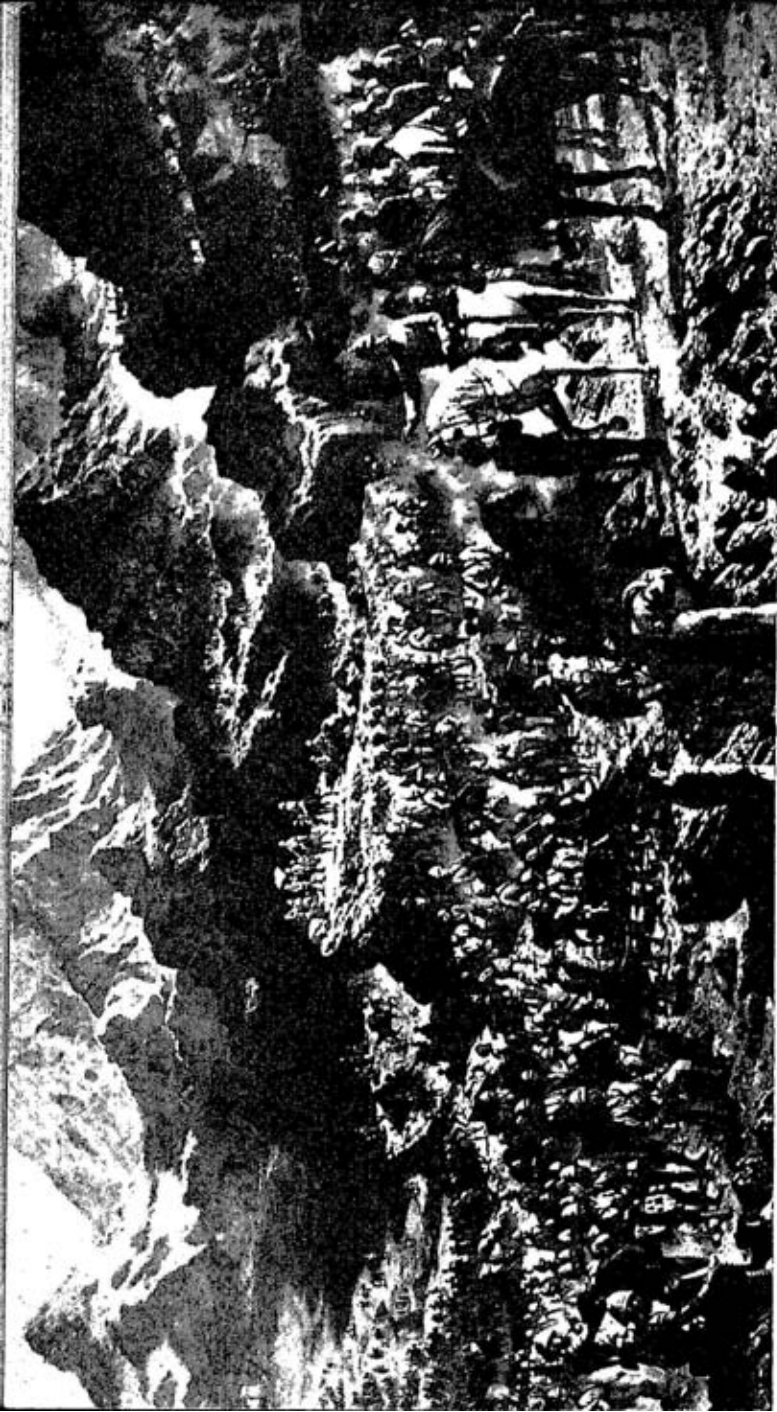
(Above) Sheep grazing near the entrance to the Khyber Pass

(Below) Cave dwellers in the Kaghan Valley





Trekking up the mountain track in Swat



Afghanistan in 1880. Lord Roberts on the march from Kabul

impassable because of mud in the wet season. Because of the problems of the North-West Frontier the Grand Trunk Road had been constructed by the British as a military highway which had a considerable effect on opening up the whole area between Lahore and Peshawar.

A glance at the maps on pages 54 and 55 will show the rainfall and temperature in both the cool and hot seasons.

Throughout the region cattle are kept which are mostly of the white humped-back variety. They are used for supplying milk and for drawing carts and agricultural implements. There are also enormous herds of goats and it is from their hair that the famous Kashmir shawls are made. There are also large flocks of sheep. They bear no resemblance to our English breeds, for they are smaller with a high-domed head and long drooping ears. Throughout the whole of Queen Victoria's reign the wool export from the north-west was a very valuable industry.

Apart from domestic animals the sub-continent has always been the home of a great number of wild animals. In the north-west areas the soldiers would have seen numerous monkeys. These would be in the fields; in the palm trees; and would be squatting and sometimes playing on the roads. During the day would be seen the never ending stream of kites, that scavenger bird peculiar to tropical countries. The soldiers might also see high up in the sky the vultures waiting to feed on animals about to die. Hundreds of poisonous snakes also are found in this area and many people die of snake bites each year. The evenings

would bring out the pretty and attractive little mongoose which runs about seemingly as fast as lightning, and the air would shrill with the screeches of many parrots and parakeets returning home to roost.

At night the screaming jackals and the occasional growl of leopard would keep many of General Roberts' soldiers awake.

In the towns and cities the trees and buildings would be full of the little grey tree rats, which are not unlike our grey squirrels and just as destructive. What they would also see, particularly in the villages and towns, would be the millions of vermin—rats and such-like creatures, all of which would be infested with tiny fleas and which were responsible for much of the disease in the country.

Let us now return to the army in camp at Peshawar, busy with their preparations for their march. Before we leave with them let us look at some of the sights the soldiers would have seen in their off duty moments.

The Peshawar museum has a magnificent collection of historical objects. There are gold, silver and copper coins. There is pottery; there are ancient Arabaic manuscripts and others from Persia of the Greco-Buddhist and Moslem cultures. One of the most treasured possessions of the museum is the famous Kanishka casket made of decorated bronze and found in excavations outside the city. The casket is believed to have contained the Buddha's ashes and the site where the casket was found is where King Kanishka built his Buddhist temple.

Another famous Buddhist building in the city is the Gorkhatri. This historic place was once the scene of Buddhist pilgrimages and at one time was the residence of the Italian Governor during the Sikh occupation of the city.

Then there is the great, massive, white Mosque standing in the centre of the Andersher Bazaar. It was built by the Mogul Governor of the city in the days of the Emperor Shah Jehan. Not far away is the greatest bazaar in the city, the Qissakhwani, which means the place of the storytellers. Legend has it that long ago old men would sit round and tell the people fabulous stories of tribal battles, romance and incredible journeys. However far the soldier had travelled and even though he knew it would not be long before he was in battle, he could at least have spent a fascinating and interesting time in the city of Peshawar. The coldest month in Peshawar is February, when the maximum temperature is about sixty-six degrees Fahrenheit. There is considerable humidity in the early morning which makes it most uncomfortable.

But now the time has come once again to march, for the army is leaving Peshawar and making its way towards the entrance to the Khyber Pass . . .

5

From the Khyber to Kabul

THE historic and world-famous Khyber Pass lies eleven miles from Peshawar and has for centuries been the most important gateway from Central Asia into the Indian sub-continent. During the last three thousand years Persian, Greek, Tartar and Mongol conquerors have forced their way through its hostile and treacherous defiles.

Alexander of Macedon, Mahmoud Ghazni, Baber and Nadir Shah marched along the very road which General Roberts was taking. Battles and excursions, murders and assassinations have occurred there over the centuries. The wild tribesmen live hidden high up on its sides and ever since Queen Victoria had come to the throne British soldiers had battled there. They had patrolled it; they had fought the Afghans, and they had endeavoured, not entirely successfully, to subdue the hostile tribes. The fact that British soldiers had been there was remembered by the many instances of the crests of famous regiments which could be seen carved high up on the rocks.

As the army marched out of Peshawar the countryside became at once cold, unfriendly, dreary and desolate. It had only one redeeming feature and that was the river Kabul on their right flank. This river

wended its way through the pass and on to the plains of Afghanistan. However, before the army reached the pass they would march through two areas of historic interest and after they left the last they would experience little comfort or help for many days.

Situated on the Grand Trunk Road the Bala Hissar Fort commanded the approaches to Peshawar four miles away. It is a fort which has frequently experienced the fortunes of war. It has been demolished and rebuilt on numerous occasions and the present building was erected during the Sikh period about 1780. It has a number of high bastions from which can be obtained magnificent views of Peshawar and the surrounding countryside.

But the army marched on and General Roberts was experiencing difficulties of which his lack of transport was not the least. Further delay would mean imminent danger; wintry weather was approaching and before long heavy snowfalls could be expected, particularly through the pass, and this could continue until he reached the plains near Kabul. It was also obvious that the Afghanistan army and the tribes in the area were well aware of his approach. They could be expected to attack at any moment, using all the advantages of the land and the weather with which they were so familiar.

They should, weather and enemy permitting, have one more battlement to pass before entering the Khyber. This was the famous Jamrud Fort only a mile or so from the entrance to the mountains, and nine miles west of Peshawar. It had been constructed

by the Sikh general, Hari Singh Narwa solely for the purposes of guarding the entrance to the pass. In 1837 the general had been killed in battle against Akbar Khan and his grave is within the walls of the town.

This fort was the last fortified outpost of British military power. There was nothing now between General Roberts and Kabul except the thirty-three miles of the Khyber Pass itself and the few odd miles of the plains of Afghanistan.

The General knew the British Resident and his staff had been massacred. He knew that in front of him were many thousands of hostile troops. Let us now look at a picture of the pass and consider for a moment the area through which the army was marching.

When the countryside is seen it will be realized why General Roberts's army had to march with such elaborate military precautions. There were no tanks to go out in front. There were no aircraft to scout ahead and bomb if necessary. It was simply hard marching by men on foot or on horseback, with weapons which might today be described as out of date as bows and arrows.

From Jamrud the pass goes zigzag in a north-westerly direction for about thirty-three miles. Along its course the army would pass through Ali Masjid, which is ten miles from Jamrud. Then Landi Kotal, which is ten miles further and finally Torkhan, the frontier post where the pass enters Afghan territory, and is about six miles beyond Landi Kotal.

The Khyber Pass itself is a defile through the

Khyber mountains and follows the course of the Kabul river. The track in those days was at its best some sixty feet wide and frequently much narrower. Straight up from the track and the river were mountains which throughout the entire length of the pass average between three and four thousand feet.

From time to time during the rainy season rivulets tear down the sides of the hills. Some enter the river, whilst others flood the track of the pass, making progress extremely difficult.

It is a land steeped in history. Along the narrow track have passed hundreds of thousands of camels, bullocks and other beasts of burden. Along it have passed hundreds of weary travellers, moving from one world to another with their goods and merchandise. Hoping, perhaps, for a prosperity in Asia which they had failed to find in the Middle East.

Now, as General Roberts' army marches, it is known that somewhere ahead of them wait Afghan armies and in the hills around are tribesmen looking down the sights of their rifles, waiting for the opportunity to pick off a British soldier.

These are the tribesmen who live up in the hills, who are constantly on the move with their herds of goats and little fat-tailed sheep. These are men prepared to wage a never ending war against authority of any kind.

As the army enters the pass they see a large V showing up against the sky, at the bottom of which is the track and river. Above are the mountains, enormous rocky crags overhanging the line of march and harbouring the enemy. It is because General



Crossing the Kabul River



in the Khyber Pass

Roberts knows the frontier and the rules of frontier warfare that his army on this occasion marches prepared and protected. There are several military preparations involved in the army's march through the pass.

As has already been told, the route as far as Peshawar had been comparatively easy. It had been through fairly friendly country and apart from the normal military precautions already described there were no really difficult problems to be faced. They had a supply problem, that hadn't changed, but when it came to marching an army through the Khyber Pass the battle situation was entirely different.

After he left Jamrud the General knew perfectly well the hostile tribesmen were in the hills and the Afghans might well be advancing to meet him.

Over the years the British had developed the art of frontier warfare. It was an operation which was developed as the result of experience in fighting the wild tribesmen and the Afghans. If one was to subdue the tribes the army had to follow them into their own territory. This meant the army was continually moving through the Khyber and other passes. If the army was marching at sea level, on a sixty-foot track and the enemy anything up to three thousand feet above them, the chances of survival were slim.

The frontier warfare operation was simple in conception, but in practice extremely effective. In simple terms it meant that if an army marched through the Khyber Pass it was essential to clear the hills in front as it proceeded. In other words, while the main body went through, scouting parties were ahead clearing the hills on each side, so that there was never any danger of the main army being ambushed. At the rear there were also patrols in case of any attack coming from behind as a result of an encircling movement.

General Roberts' army with its patrols fought hard to get through the pass. Both his main body and their patrols were constantly in action and he was right in his appreciation of the situation, because the Afghans had in fact come to meet him. Throughout the entire length of the pass the enemy attacked on both the line of the river and in the hills.

The road was difficult, there were ridges and hillocks to be crossed and as they moved on the enemy had to be chased out of their positions before the main body could proceed. The numbers marching through the pass were less than four thousand; the rest were occupied in the patrols to the front and rear. Even then with that small army General Roberts had to split his forces before he could fight his way out on to the plains. His army moved on through hot, rocky valleys, with very little vegetation although here and there were small streams now full at the end of the monsoon rains.

As they moved out of the pass they came into a series of fertile valleys still by the side of the Kabul

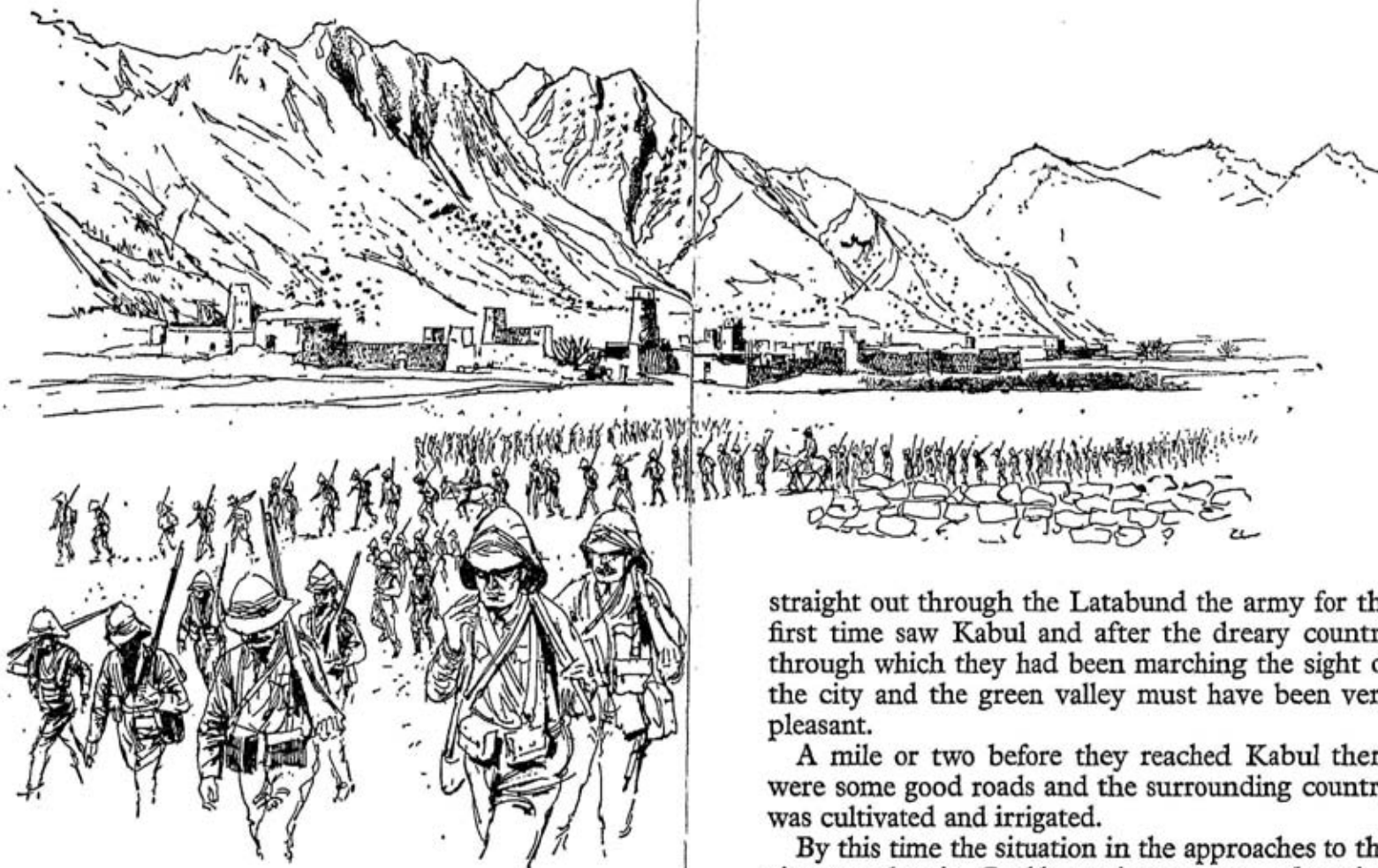
river. Here there were corn fields and fruit trees, but the track was extremely difficult and it was after this march that the British decided for military purposes to extend the road from the pass as far as Kabul.

In front of the army now lay the Jalalabad plain with its walled city and here it was that General Roberts achieved a decisive victory over the Afghan army. He didn't hesitate; he marched on, for Kabul was his objective and there the Amir was to be taught a lesson. There the Afghans were to learn the might of British military power and to pay, not only for the massacre of the British Representative, but for their folly in flirting with other powers.

Through Jalalabad the army moved on passing the massive gates of the city and the highly decorated palace. Then on through the desert to the Nimla Gardens. There they saw great, wide avenues of cypress trees.

To the south lay the White mountains, on the other side of which lay the Kurram Pass, an area also well known to the General. They passed through Gandamuk and during the whole of this time there was intermittent fighting until they came to the old bridge over the Surkhab, a tributary of the Kabul. By now the enemy was falling back on the city and General Roberts came down the long gorge and then over the top of the mountain which at that point stands some six thousand feet above sea level.

Here the country was desolate and barren, with very little to be seen except rock and sand. This was probably the bleakest and most unfriendly part of the whole march. It is the world at its most gloomy. But



General Roberts' army approaching Afghanistan

straight out through the Latabund the army for the first time saw Kabul and after the dreary country through which they had been marching the sight of the city and the green valley must have been very pleasant.

A mile or two before they reached Kabul there were some good roads and the surrounding country was cultivated and irrigated.

By this time the situation in the approaches to the city was chaotic. Gurkha regiments were advancing rapidly under supporting fire from the Seaforth Highlanders and as General Roberts said at the time "the enemy found it too hot and bolted".

The General then sent forward his cavalry units to mop up and so some two hours afterwards the

General himself entered the city by the Lahore gate.

Kabul, dirty and untidy, lies seven thousand feet above sea level. It possesses a kind of eastern beauty and gives the impression of being surrounded by mountains, where to the north the vastness of the Hindu Kush range seems overwhelming. The streets like many cities in the East were narrow, dusty and smelly. The shops and stalls in the bazaar had no fronts and they were selling a variety of produce. There was rice and grain and the inevitable *chappatti*, the large, flat unleavened pancake so much liked by the people of India and Afghanistan. There was tea from Southern India, crockery from Russia, lamps from Germany and many old British uniforms and boots. There were also beautiful shawls and cloth from Kashmir. The soldiers could see the cloth of the country, a thick, woollen cloth made from camel hair and there were carpets from Turkistan and locally made leather shoes with peculiar turned-up toes.

Apart from the poor hovels and so-called shops there were many charming houses with balconies and lovely gardens. There were areas where primitive factories were in operation, making engines, lathes and ammunition, whilst a great variety of leather goods were also manufactured.

The army pitched camp within a few yards of the Residency where the massacre had occurred and the General and his staff went to find out exactly what had happened. It didn't take them long to realize there had been a great deal of treachery and double

dealing on the part of the Amir and his government. General Roberts had orders from Britain and was determined to put an end to the troubles. He proclaimed that "the treacherous crime had brought disgrace upon the Afghan people and that the city of Kabul should be destroyed. But the British government desired to temper justice with mercy and that the city would be spared."

The General then went on to explain that the nation would be disarmed.

The population viewed the situation with relief once they realized their city was not to be destroyed and that General Roberts was a man of sense. As a result the Amir abdicated and General Roberts had achieved his object. Afghanistan was completely subdued and now lay within the power of Britain.

It was the end of a mighty march. It marked the halfway point in the life of a great Englishman, a man who became Earl Roberts and who lived on until shortly after the outbreak of the first world war in 1914.

That was the India of General Roberts. A country of a once great civilization, which for centuries had been torn by wars, battles and poverty. Conquered and governed by the British it continued until 1947, when it was divided and emerged as two separate Independent States. One remained as India, the other became Pakistan.

Speaking generally the division was made between the Hindu and Moslem. Pakistan becoming a Moslem state with a population of about ninety million.

However, Pakistan is also divided into two parts,

West and East Pakistan. But we are concerned only with the West, which covers an area of approximately three hundred and ten thousand square miles with a population of about forty million.

The march of General Roberts to the Khyber Pass from Lahore was entirely within West Pakistan.

Whenever new states are created there are always immense problems. There are boundaries to be worked out. Populations to be moved and, in the case of India, divisions made of the old army, navy and air force. It is hardly surprising that difficulties arose, some of which were created by refugees and others by serious economical and financial questions. But on the whole both new countries have settled down well and they are now Republics within the British Commonwealth.

We now return from Kabul to Peshawar. Then we will travel north to some of the most beautiful country in the world. After we have reached the foothills of the Himalayas we will turn back to Peshawar and travel south across the great deserts to the port of Karachi, the city which was, until 1959, the capital of all Pakistan. We will soon see how different the towns and country look from the days of General Roberts.

PART II

From the Khyber to Karachi

6

North to Malakand and Swat

AFTER the British had handed over power and the new States had been created, the government of Pakistan passed an Act in 1955 laying down the area of West Pakistan. It included the former Governor's Provinces of the Punjab, North-West Frontier and Sind. There were also the former Chief Commissioners' Provinces of Baluchistan and Karachi, the States of Bahawalpur and Khaipur and the Baluchistan States Union. There were a number of tribal areas in Baluchistan, the Punjab and the North-West Frontier, and also such States as Chitral, Dir and Swat.

In this journey we are not concerned with East Pakistan, which is a thousand miles away on the other side of India and was carved out of the old Province of Bengal.

Immediately to the north-east of Pakistan and almost immediately due north of Lahore is the old Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir. This area does not come into the story of West Pakistan, but

whether it belongs to Pakistan or India its ultimate outcome is urgent because all of the principal rivers of West Pakistan and India pass through it and rise in the Himalayas beyond. In a land where water is so valuable the sources and courses of rivers, and the people who are in a position to control them, are of the utmost importance.

Eighty years ago we left General Roberts and his army at Kabul in Afghanistan. The General had achieved his object, he had avenged the murder of the British Representative and subdued the Afghan population. In his march through the North-West Frontier Province and the Afghan tribal territory he had demonstrated once more the might of Britain. Nevertheless those areas did not remain calm for long. Throughout the remaining time during which the British were responsible for the Indian Empire there were frequent minor wars with constant expeditions into tribal territory in an endeavour to keep the area reasonably quiet.

On our way back we see that basically the country is still the same. The Khyber Pass and the road from Kabul haven't altered a lot since the days of Lord Roberts. The area is still inhabited by a likeable, hardy and virile people. But if Lord Roberts could have travelled again in the areas which now constitute Pakistan he would certainly be amazed by the changes which have taken place. He would find many new towns where none had existed before. Surrounding many of these towns he would see many great buildings of stone and steel, new plants and factories and new hospitals and schools. Where before the great

rivers had laid waste to hundreds of thousands of acres and where vast tracts had been waterlogged and deposited with salt, many of these areas are now coming under cultivation because the rivers have been controlled by great dams. Where nothing in the



Planting rice

General's day could be seen but scrub and a few weeds, wheat and rice are now growing. Great hydro-electric dams are being built on the rivers, not only to control them, but to produce electricity for light in the houses and power in the factories.

Enormous areas of natural wealth have been opened up and petroleum, coal, iron ore, bauxite,

natural gas, marble, salt and sulphur are some of the products being won from the ground; whilst wheat, cotton and rice are being grown and domestic live-stock numbers are increasing every day.

The country still remains basically agricultural.



Harvesting rice

Over ninety per cent of the population live in villages and over eighty per cent of them earn their living in farming or trades of a similar nature. But, owing to the remarkable economic achievement in this country in the last few years, Lord Roberts would have been surprised to have learned that, today, the area sown

to grain is over five hundred and twenty million acres. In his day the yield per acre of many of the crops had been the lowest in the world; it is now rising rapidly. Very few mineral resources had been properly exploited and the condition of the forests was poor and neglected.

When the country became independent nearly all the consumer goods had to be imported. The income per head of the population was dreadfully low, only a few pennies a day, and in all the industrial fields production was insufficient to meet even the home demand. For example sugar production was only thirty thousand tons a year, representing about twelve per cent of the country's demands. The production of fuel and power, cement, iron and steel was only a fraction of what the country needed.

During the British occupation there had been a system of railways throughout the sub-continent. It was the North Western Railway which ran through Pakistan. In the north-west area the railway had originally terminated at Jamrud, nine miles beyond Peshawar, but later had been extended to Landi Khana at the Afghan end of the Khyber Pass. Today the North Western Railway has a route mileage of nearly five and a half thousand miles and the number of passengers carried has increased in the last ten years by over thirty per cent.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century the education system was hopelessly inadequate. Nearly ninety per cent of the population were unable to read or write. There was little primary and no advanced education and a Health Service as we know it in

England did not exist. The medical services were in the hands of a few very overworked doctors. Drugs and medicines were quite out of the reach of the ordinary man and sanitation and hygiene were extremely primitive. In the towns and villages of the sub-continent millions died every year of the dreadful tropical diseases, such as cholera, dysentery and malaria, whilst the death rate from tuberculosis and the deficiency diseases was also very high. There was no doubt that when Independence came the new State faced an alarming task. However, since 1958 there has been a remarkable improvement in health. Hospitals are cleaner and better equipped. Medical colleges have improved, with more being built, and there are plans for post-graduate medical education. Sanitation and hygiene are improving and schemes are in operation to prevent the outbreak of epidemics and infectious diseases. There are now 2,000 trained nurses, 8,500 doctors, 563 hospitals, 2,200 dispensaries and nearly 300 maternity and child welfare centres. There has been a great expansion of medical and public health facilities and already 180 health schemes have been approved at the cost of nearly four million pounds. Malaria and tuberculosis, the two major problems, are now being treated throughout the country. By the end of 1961 more than forty million people had been vaccinated.

Nevertheless these improvements are of little use unless at the same time there are increased facilities for education. Health and education go together.

Many countries in Asia and other parts of the world are becoming independent and joining the

United Nations as new Sovereign states. In most cases they are backward and generally underdeveloped, because for many years only a small percentage of the population could read or write. In Lord Roberts' day in Pakistan the percentage was about five. Since Independence it has improved, but is still only about nineteen per cent. However, this improvement is continuing every year.

No country can take its place today and compete with the rest of the world unless it has a highly educated population. This applies to all walks of life, but particularly to science, engineering, medicine or agriculture. In the last fifty years progress has been made in all these fields. Recently the government has made vigorous efforts to improve the education of the population, they regard the reduction of illiteracy as all-important. For this reason it is essential to provide a sound primary education, which is necessary if any advance is to be made in the fields of higher and technical education. With that end in view the government now have a policy which regards all forms of education of the utmost importance and are paying great attention to the higher and technical side. The teaching of languages is being encouraged. Money is being spent on text books and, of course, there are many schemes for the training of teachers.

The government now provide free, compulsory primary education which in effect has had the result of providing schooling for all up to the age of fifteen.

Throughout the country the increase in educational facilities is remarkable. There are now 44,000 primary schools, more than double what there were

ten years ago. What is perhaps even more remarkable is the numbers now attending the various centres of higher education. Already the primary school teachers number over 250,000 and there are over 100,000 secondary school teachers. Today nearly five million children are attending primary schools, over a million and a half are at secondary schools and half a million young people are attending a variety of technical colleges including industrial, art and science. Five thousand students attend medical colleges, four thousand the law colleges, whilst the number at the universities is nearly ten thousand.

Fortunately for Pakistan and other countries in the Far East, when the second world war ended several of the wealthier and more advanced countries, such as Britain and America, resolved to bring assistance to the under-developed countries of Asia. This was called the Columbo Plan and under it great help was obtained by Pakistan for many of her new projects.

The reconstruction and building up of the country commenced in the early part of 1955. The target was to raise the living standards of the people, to improve the monetary situation in the country by increasing exports and to provide at home that which had been previously imported. They also had to increase employment, to provide more social services, such as housing, education and health; and to develop more quickly the backward areas in the tribal parts of West Pakistan.

It is interesting to note that a great deal of these objects has already been attained, although not perhaps quite as quickly as had been hoped. But such

delay as there was partly due to large increases in population, due to Moslem refugees pouring in from India and Kashmir.

The increase in electricity has been quite astonishing and by the end of 1960 over one thousand villages in West Pakistan had been electrified.

The output of food grain has gone up very much and by 1965 has an estimated increase since 1947 of twenty-three per cent. The production of rice now exceeds eight million tons a year.

On the industrial side there has been a substantial improvement. Some of the industries now working well are tobacco, textiles, leather, paper, rubber, chemicals, petroleum and coal. Food refrigeration and canning have advanced considerably. Cloth and yarn is now not only sufficient to clothe the population, but provides a valuable export as well.

Many daily essentials are now produced including medicines and new drugs. Travel and communications have improved out of all recognition, and there are regular road services throughout the country as well as sea and air services to nearly all parts of the world.

We have already seen the great improvement in education, but there is one aspect of this which must be emphasized and that is since Independence for the first time girls are being educated.

The reason why women's education has been neglected is a matter of history. In the great Moslem States, such as Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan and the areas of north-west India women had been regarded as very much of secondary importance to

men. They were fit only for looking after the home and family and for centuries in all these Moslem states a custom called strict Purdah was observed. Very briefly this meant the woman of the family was not allowed to be seen or looked at except by her husband. She remained in entire seclusion within the house, and if and when she went out, which was seldom, she would be completely enveloped in a garment called a *burqua*. This was a tent-like cloak, usually black in colour, which went over the woman's head and was draped around her right down to the ground. In front of her face there would be sewn one or two small, embroidered, slit squares of the material through which she could see.

Certainly in the days of General Roberts most of the women would have been seen dressed like that. Today they are still to be seen in these curious garments, but in the last thirty or forty years there has been in these countries a general freeing of women, probably resulting from the fact that many people have travelled in other countries apart from their own. Western ideas have spread and been adopted in many parts, and today European dress is worn by both sexes in many parts of Asia. There is no doubt that with the new development of education in Pakistan this highly intelligent nation will soon be producing men and women well able to compete with the rest of the world in science, industry and commerce.

Probably one of the most astonishing differences that Lord Roberts would have seen if he had gone back on the route of his march was in the field of

health and medicine. Many of the dread diseases he knew are no longer frightening. Hygiene has advanced tremendously. Preventative health measures are a matter of everyday occurrence and there are mass vaccination and inoculation campaigns. Health centres for the provision of medical care are being



Moslem women wearing burquas

provided in many of the country and town areas, and clinics for mothers and children are being established.

What is perhaps even more important is that supplies of fresh and clean water are being brought, not only to the towns, but to the small villages in isolated areas where disease and sickness generally were so prevalent in the past. The advance of medicine and

the use of new drugs has benefited the people of the world everywhere, and nowhere more than in Asia.

Under the Pakistan government great strides are being made to improve living conditions for the people of this great new land. There is a step forward in every walk of life. More transport, more goods in the shops, more food, and still more houses, hospitals and schools.

On our travels through West Pakistan we soon realize that the character of the country has been completely changed by the present government. Improvements are to be seen everywhere, not only in the countryside, but in the villages and towns. Signs of prosperity are appearing in what was once a barren and bleak land.

As we have seen the Pakistan economy is based principally upon agriculture. Good farming, as always, is dependent on new and well-developed irrigation systems. Here these are based on the River Indus. Although primitive methods of cultivation are still in existence, there is a substantial increase in the use of modern farm implements and crop yields have been much increased by the use of artificial fertilizers, for the manufacture of which there are a number of factories now in existence.

One of the principal factors that for centuries has delayed the improvement in farming in many Eastern countries has been their system of land tenure. That means the system by which the individual holds, or rents, a piece of land. In the sub-continent of India and later in Pakistan the system is what is called

“feudal”. It was very similar to that which was introduced into England by William the Conqueror and long since abolished. It meant in effect that all the land was owned by a very few people. It also meant that the vast majority of the people employed in farming were either small tenant farmers or wage-earning farmworkers. In Asia the tenant or the farmworker might never during the whole of his life have seen or met the man who owned the land upon which he worked. The chances were he was also hopelessly in debt because he could never earn enough to live and support a family.

In 1958 the Pakistan government appointed a Land Reform Commission. This met to assist the government to bring about a new land tenure policy, which was to create greater equality of opportunity. It was also to assist in increasing agricultural production and improving the standard of rural living. After certain recommendations the government decided to abolish the old feudal system of landholdings, because this had resulted in the concentration of the land in the hands of only six thousand people in West Pakistan. There was also insecurity on the part of the tenants of the land and because of the backwardness of farming it was obvious that unless there were substantial reforms the economy of the whole country would be affected.

We must remember that Pakistan economy is still based mainly on farming and that farming in some form or another is the occupation of nearly ninety per cent of the population. These are facts which cannot be emphasized too often when we travel through

the country and see the areas the villagers have to farm.

We must remember too the main cash crops of the country; jute, cotton, tea and tobacco. Jute and cotton cover less than ten per cent of the entire cultivated areas, but they bring in over eighty per cent of the foreign exchange earnings.

The new land reforms by any standards are significant and far reaching in effect. Of course, in the first instance they were intended to improve production, but they also aimed at altering the economy by getting rid of the feudal system and helping the people who actually work on the land. Now no person can own more than 500 acres of irrigated, or 1,000 acres of unirrigated land.

So far as the unirrigated land is concerned, this means land which is unlikely to be irrigated in the immediate future. However, owners can keep an area of land up to 150 acres which was under cultivation as orchard. They could also make gifts of limited areas to their families and heirs. All land over and above these limits was taken over by the government and offered in the first instance for sale to the existing tenants who were given the option of buying by instalments spread over twenty-five years. If the tenants did not wish to buy, then the government sold to other persons who they thought would be suitable in that they would work the land efficiently, be capable farmers and improve production.

The Landlords were given fair compensation, also payable over twenty-five years. Other important

changes were that the tenants were given security of tenure. They were protected from ejectment, and the raising of rents. The employment of free labour was prohibited as were all other dues. In other words once a tenant paid a fair and economic rate that was all he was liable for.

What was, perhaps, economically the most important provision of all was the abolition of small, unproductive farm holdings. Where they existed they were consolidated into larger farms.

With the problems of water being successfully tackled the full benefit of these reforms is already being seen. Modern methods are increasing soil fertility, better seeds are being used and there is a great improvement in marketing conditions.

More than two million acres of land were taken over by the government in West Pakistan and on this land over one hundred and fifty thousand landless peasants have already been settled. With the security now provided there is an incentive to the new owners to invest money in their own holdings and to improve in every way their production.

The picture of farming has indeed altered, but that is modern Pakistan. All very different from the days when Lord Roberts' army marched eighty years ago.

Like Kabul, Peshawar itself has not altered very much. Now some of the streets are paved. There is water and a sewerage scheme. There is electric light, but there are still plenty of camels and bullock carts to be seen and plenty of horse-drawn gharries, or pony carts. Today there are also many motor-cars

and buses. The older parts of the city remain very much the same, but there are many fine new buildings, new shops, new factories and new blocks of flats. But the most impressive of all is the University which was opened in 1950. It was developed from the Islam College, founded in 1931 and taken over in 1949 by the government and built in the oriental style of architecture. Incorporated in the building are seven hostels accommodating up to one hundred students each. There is also a fine library and reading room containing over thirty thousand books.

Here in the University the old and the new have been carefully blended. There are opportunities for modern learning and for research into the past. What is interesting is that there has been established an agricultural and industrial development school where workers can receive practical instruction and help before going out into the country to do their job.

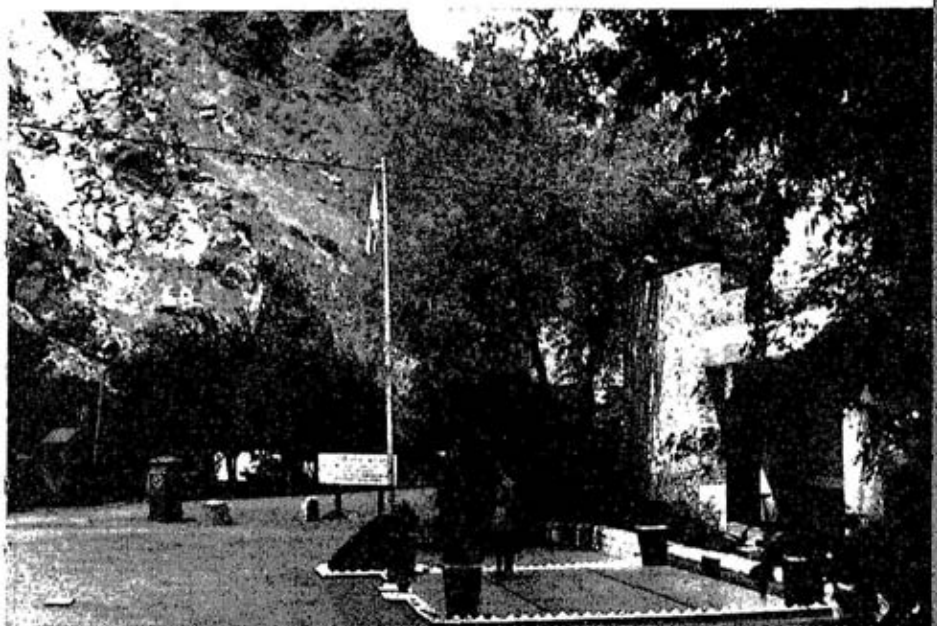
Peshawar University is somewhat different from the kind of university which we are accustomed to at home, because instruction includes kindergarten as well as advanced courses. It is a teaching as well as an examining body and contains colleges for professional and technical instruction. There is a medical college as well as an engineering and law college, and, of course, the usual subjects of arts, science, theology, education and such-like.

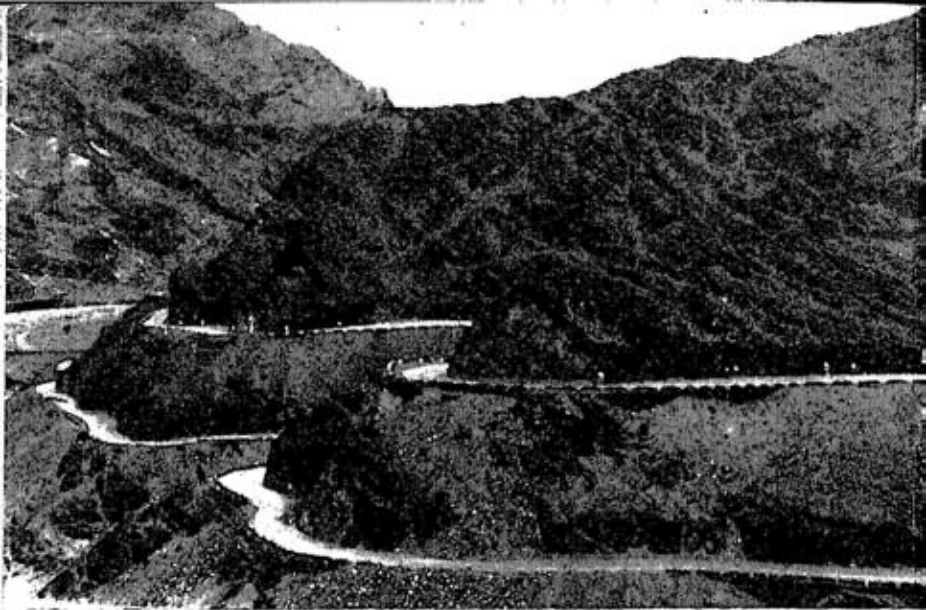
Once again look at the map. Immediately north of Peshawar, in an area known as the Peshawar District, are a number of towns and states which we will visit in due course. To the far north it touches Afghanistan



(Above) Jamrud Fort at the entrance to the Khyber Pass

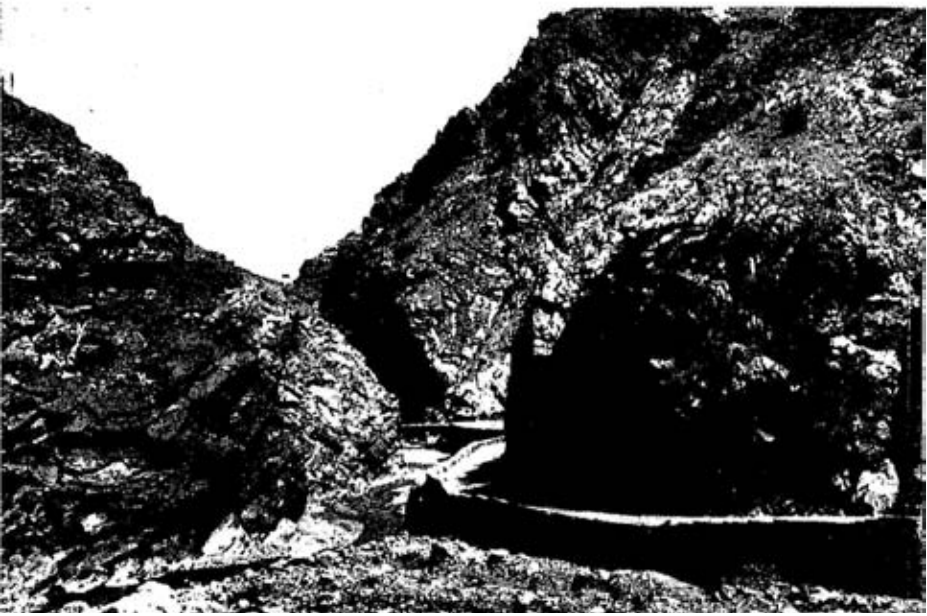
(Below) A check post at Torkham on the Afghanistan frontier

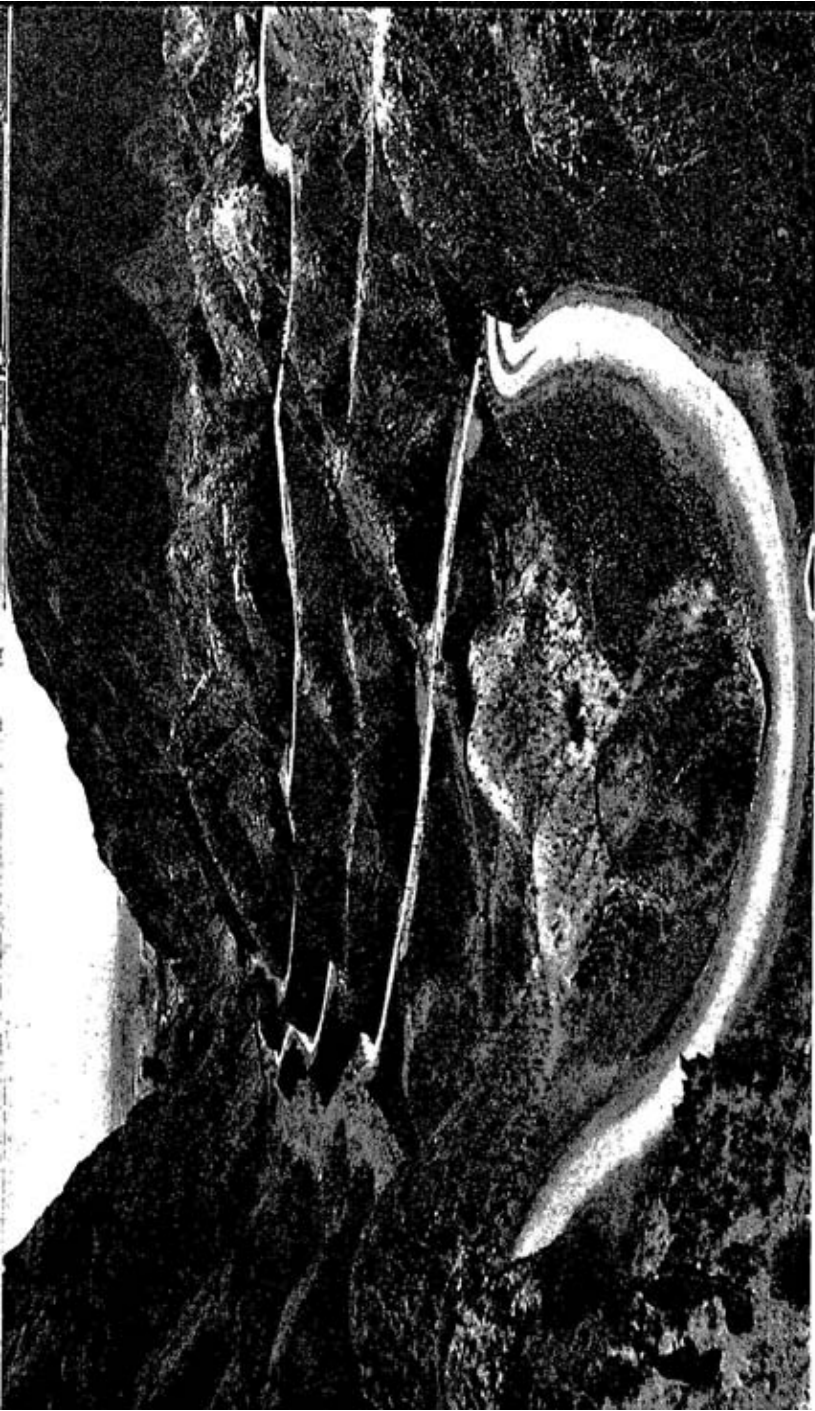




(Above) Rocky gorges in the Khyber Pass

(Below) A mountainous road near the Khyber Pass





A bird's-eye view of the Khyber Pass. Showing the road twisting through the mountains



(Above) Concrete bridge nearing completion at Dargai

(Below) A road scene on the North-West Frontier



and the Soviet Union at the Pamir Mountains. To the west are Afghanistan and the Mountains of the Hindu Kush and to the east, beyond the Hazara District, is the disputed territory of Kashmir.

When we have visited this territory in the north we will return to Peshawar and travel south through Baluchistan to Quetta. There we will join the train and that is something very different from the ordinary railway journey in England.

We now leave Peshawar on the first part of our journey and go to a place fifteen miles distant where an undertaking has been built which is part of the modern development of Pakistan. This is the Warsak Dam, and is a project which was planned as a joint effort by Pakistan and Canada under the Colombo Plan. It is a dam two hundred and thirty-five feet high and seven hundred and fifty feet long and is on the river Kabul. Built with it is a mighty power station. It took four years to complete and cost many millions of pounds. It produces a vast amount of electricity, the output of which will nearly double in the next ten years.

The dam also provides irrigation by a series of canals on both sides of a large reservoir, of over a hundred and twenty thousand acres of the surrounding district. Here indeed is a good example of change since the days of Lord Roberts. When his soldiers marched past, the area was bleak, desolate, bare and mostly uninhabited. Today around the dam there are over five hundred houses and a small town has grown up which is nearly self-sufficient. Everywhere there are good roads. There are plenty of pleasant

lawns surrounding a hospital and shopping centre, where there are banking, postal and telephone facilities.

Having seen the dam let us turn north-east, for some forty miles from Peshawar is the town of Mardan, a town intimately known to Lord Roberts. A place he had visited on many occasions and which in his day was the permanent headquarters of one of the most famous of the old Indian Army regiments, the Queen's Own Corps of Guides. There is a Fort built in 1854. Today the town has lost much of its soldierly air, because it is acquiring a new look and is rapidly becoming an industrial town.

Since we left Peshawar and travelled north we have gradually left the arid wastes of the desert scrubland and have approached fertile valleys where the earth is rich and where there is plenty of water. As a result two very important crops are grown around Mardan and today, tobacco and sugar cane are appearing on a very large scale. Industry has now arrived in the form of sugar mills and the one near Mardan on the main road to Nowshera is already the largest in Asia. Since it was built in 1950 it has produced already over three hundred thousand tons of sugar. Here again is another instance of how a practically uninhabited region of years ago has developed. The sugar mills alone employ over two thousand people during the crushing season of six months and many hundreds in the off season period. At the same time something over twenty-five thousand tons of molasses are produced as a by-product.

Nevertheless, many military aspects of Mardan are

still to be seen, and there is still plenty of evidence of the British occupation which would have been well known to General Roberts. There are many famous military monuments in the town and certainly one of the best known is the memorial erected in memory of the Englishmen who were killed at the Residency at Kabul and whose murder was the reason for Lord Roberts' great march.

In his early days Sir Winston Churchill as a young Hussar officer was frequently in the area and it was in one of his earlier books *The Malakand Field Force* that he described the very beautiful cemetery and chapel of the Guides regiment which still exists at Mardan. Sir Winston told of the regimental cemetery in these words "a passer by should pause to see the Guides cemetery, perhaps the only regimental one in the world . . . it is a green and pleasant spot. Nor is there any place in the world where a soldier might lie in such brave company." These words were, of course, written before the first world war.

The chapel resembles a small English church. It was built in 1886, has many lovely stained glass windows and the garden surrounding it is beautifully laid out with plants and trees.

The climate round Mardan is not much different from Peshawar. The average winter temperature is about fifty-six degrees.

From Mardan we continue north-west crossing the mountain range by the Malakand pass which leads into the Swat valley. Here in existence for centuries is an old Buddhist road and it was on this track in the early part of the sixteenth century that the

Pathans from the Khyber mountains fought their way into the valley. Shortly afterwards one of the Emperor Akbar's generals built a fort there and during the latter part of Queen Victoria's reign there was a great deal of fighting between the British and the various tribes. Although it may well be said neither side ever knew who had won! Eventually the British became resigned to the position and this spot on the map was thereafter never marked red or claimed as British! Again much of the excitement of those days is described in Sir Winston Churchill's book.

Since then Mardan has been the site of a military garrison. Coming through the pass it will be seen the countryside, since the days of Lord Roberts, has undergone a considerable change. Once more as the result of building the Malakand and Dargai hydro-electric stations much electricity is generated as at Warsak, and vast quantities of water are provided for irrigation. The temperature in winter at Malakand is somewhat cooler than Mardan and we now approach some of the most beautiful country in Asia.

During Lord Roberts' journey we passed through a great many different areas. Some were parts of British India, some were tribal areas and there was the kingdom of Afghanistan. Some were what used to be called Native, or Princely States and, as we have just come through the Malakand pass into one of the States, it would perhaps be convenient to consider the position of these little, independent countries, which before 1947 were dotted about all over the sub-continent.

Until Independence there were several hundred

States, all entirely different in size and character. They ranged from the great State of Hyderabad, over which the Nizam ruled and which consisted of many millions of people, down the scale to a tiny State amounting to merely an acre or two with a population of perhaps a few thousand.

They all had one thing in common and that was allegiance to the British Crown. How this had come about is very interesting. We have already seen how over the centuries a great many civilizations and dynasties had ruled over various parts of old India. There were the Mogul Emperors in Delhi. To the west and south there were the Mahrattas and the Rajputs. In the Punjab there were the Sikhs, but wherever the great Emperors ruled there were a number of lesser rulers acknowledging their sovereignty who were usually known as Maharajahs or Rajahs.

When the British conquered India many of these rulers remained. This meant that within the geographical boundaries of the old Indian Empire there were two distinct areas of administration. There was that part called British India, consisting of over a million square miles and which came under the direct rule of the British Crown. At the head of the government in British India was the Viceroy, and this territory was divided into a number of Provinces all of which were again further sub-divided for administrative purposes.

Between and in the various Provinces, dotted about all over the country were about seven hundred Native States. These covered an area of some seven hundred

square miles containing over a fifth of the total population of the sub-continent.

With the coming of the British most of the Princely States remained in existence. They entered into treaties which allowed them to continue as Independent Sovereign States subject to certain limitations. They were obliged to owe allegiance to Britain. They were unable to keep large armies, or to make war. But providing they behaved themselves and the State was well run, the British government did not interfere. On the other hand if there was maladministration the British government could intervene and govern for a limited or permanent period.

By 1947 many of the States had become modernized and up to date, and were similar to the rest of British India.

When the time came for Britain to retire from India and for the new States to be created the Princely areas were not the least of the problems that had to be dealt with. Generally speaking these States, like the rest of the sub-continent, went into India or Pakistan according to the wishes of the majority of the population. There were one or two difficulties where the ruler was of a different religion from that of his subjects. But again generally speaking the divisions worked well except in one or two cases where there were some temporary difficulties and, of course, in Kashmir to which we have already referred and which in 1963 is unsolved.

The State of Swat is very popular with tourists and is an extremely enlightened hill area in North Pakistan's tribal belt. It is charming and frequently

compared with Switzerland for it consists almost entirely of high, snow-capped mountains and very beautiful, fertile valleys.

In the old days Kashmir was always regarded as the holiday area of India, but today Swat is even more pleasant. The enormous mountains provide the background to the landscape and the lovely valleys provide a carpet of colour throughout most of the year. There is the green of growing corn, the yellow of the ripening mustard, whilst wild, tropical flowers in their scarlet, purple and orange flourish everywhere. From the thick forests streams run in profusion down to the valleys and everywhere on the lower foothills of the mountains are seen again the fantastic, varied colours of the tropical flowers.

Swat, however, may be delightful, but it is a tough country which is not surprising considering that the population is nearly entirely Pathan. For here is a country inhabited by these virile people, who would scorn many of the soft civilized ways of Kashmir and other parts of India. In this country every sort of vegetation grows in abundance and it is a little part of the world still completely unspoilt. The climate is delightful, the whole region secluded and there is very little industry. It is often described as a paradise on earth and although it consists of an area of over four thousand square miles its population is only just over half a million. It should be remembered that this is a good deal less than the population of Manchester which is about forty square miles!

The climate of Swat for most of the year is

96 WITH ROBERTS THROUGH THE KHYBER PASS
extremely moderate, although it can be quite cool in winter.

Having come through the pass we are soon in the vast expanse of the main Swat valley. We can travel on wide, well-constructed roads, bounded for many hundreds of yards on each side by lilac trees. Beyond we see for the first time a really flourishing farming community. There is plenty of water and a perfect climate and in this State we will see every evidence of general prosperity. Continuing on through the villages we notice they are well built, clean and tidy. In every village there is a school and a medical clinic. Travelling towards the capital, Saidu Sharif, from Mingora, the principal market town, we will see dotted here and there on our route several small forts. The reason for these is also a matter of history.

The origin of the State goes back to the day of the old Buddhist culture. This was discovered by an Italian archaeological mission which has been working in the area for many years. They have uncovered many rock carvings and other treasures and it would appear from Greek history that when Alexander led his armies over the mountains it took him the best part of two years to conquer the people of this valley. It was after that that he fought his way through the mountainous regions to the east to cross the river Indus in about 326 B.C.

That is history, but in comparatively modern times and certainly when Lord Roberts was there, the inhabitants were just as warlike and as difficult to conquer as they were in the days of Alexander.

About forty years ago the various tribes were arguing and fighting each other. The country was a permanent battleground and life and property were regarded as of little account. One of the principal tribal rulers was known as the Wali and during the first world war as a result of his immensely strong personality he managed to bring some peace and order to the area and as has been rightly said "carved a kingdom out of chaos". He was a man of great intelligence, a born leader, and having opened up the country with a series of well-built roads and improved communications he soon overcame any opposition. What is perhaps strange in these days of autocratic rulers is that he voluntarily abdicated in 1949 in favour of his son, who is the present Wali, also an extremely able administrator. He has continued his modernizing efforts and there is no doubt that today the State has continued along these extremely prosperous lines.

The ruler's palace in the capital at Saidu Sharif is where Queen Elizabeth II stayed during her visit in 1961. The city itself lies on the Swat river and is over three thousand feet above sea level and today is a comparatively modern city with many amenities.

In the State there are no large industries because much of the economy still depends on farming, although quite recently two textile mills have been opened. There is, however, a lot of village industry making blankets, curtains, handbags, and such-like.

As we leave the capital to travel north we follow the

valley of the river, crossing many small streams and tributaries, branching on both sides from the main river and from which thousands of acres are irrigated.

Throughout the entire length of this valley maize, wheat, rice, mustard, tobacco and opium poppies are grown and because of the extremely temperate climate the State is today entirely self-supporting in food. Indeed in most years it has a surplus which can be exported to neighbouring areas. Also in the valley you will see orchards growing grapes, pears, apples, oranges, lemons and walnuts. Perhaps very little has changed since Lord Roberts' day except that the farming has moved with the times and the old tribal battles are long since forgotten. Although it is still very rural the authorities have now realized that in the State there is a vast mineral wealth as yet untouched. It is believed to be very rich in minerals and marble has been discovered near Saidu Sharif.

Beyond the valleys way up in the mountains, but below the snow line, there are immense forests of fir and pine and a great deal of timber is cut every season for ordinary commercial purposes as well as fuel. For a long time railway sleepers have been a principal export from these forests.

Further north, thirty miles from the capital, we come to the town of Madyan. Here we are nearly five thousand feet up and the whole area is one of unsurpassed beauty. It should be remembered that on the whole of this journey through Swat, although we are passing through a valley, we are steadily climbing and if we were to continue far enough we would

eventually finish in the foothills of the Pamirs to the west and the Himalayas to the east.

Now we see great mountains towering on each side of the valley, with streams and waterfalls rushing down the hillside. Thirty miles further and still going up, the valley widens and breaks into the plain at Kalam, now six thousand feet up. Here the plain is several miles across and it is at this point that the two mountain streams, Utrot and Ushu, come together to form the river Swat. The great Pamir and Himalayan mountains stand out in all their majestic glory. As we turn back towards Peshawar some miles to the south-west, we pass through Buner, which is a large, flat, circular area drained by the Barander river and its tributaries. Here is, perhaps, the most famous shrine in the north-west area, that of Pir Baba. As we prepare to leave Swat we pass by Marghazar, another charming town some ten miles from the capital, where the great Wali went to live in religious seclusion after his abdication. Although he no longer takes any active part in the public affairs of the State, this great man, part saint and part magnificent administrator, is still respected by all. For he it was who brought peace and prosperity to this delightful small country.

Back in Peshawar we arrive in time for a performance of the Khattak dance, a famous battle dance of the Pathans. It is the war dance of Pakistan and originally of the North-West Frontier. It is a dance of the mountains and is performed with a great deal of noise and was formerly danced by the tribes before going into battle, or sometimes to celebrate a victory.

It is not confined to the Khattak tribes. Many Pathans, who normally by custom wear their hair short, perform it, including the Wazirs, the Mahsuds and the Turis. There are a variety of movements and when danced by the Khattaks the dancers go round in complete circles, while the Wazirs and others shake and move their heads while standing still. The Khattaks have always been very fond of dancing and a great deal of surplus energy is expended in this vigorous entertainment. There is a saying that "at the sound of a drum a Khattak of any age will dance".

The dance was originally performed with a sword and shield, but when the carrying of swords by the tribes was forbidden they took to dancing with handkerchiefs and sticks in their hands, similar to the English Morris Dance.

For many years great numbers of the Khattak tribe have served in the army and when at any military station a dance was performed it was usually by the Khattak men. Hence the term "Khattak dance" came to be known throughout the army.

When danced in the village the ceremony is usually referred to as "Bangara" or "Balballa". The setting of the dance is often round a log fire. At the beginning there is a roll of drums. The music is provided by men playing on small, thin pipes. In some cases bagpipes are used, but this is mostly restricted to the army. The music is unwritten and the men play simple straightforward notes consisting of long and short beats. For the "Balballa" it is four long and one half beats and for the "Bangara" one full and one half

beat. The number of the long and short beats varies according to the movements of the dance.

With the roll of the drums the dancers move in a circle round the drummers and their speed increases gradually in time with the drums and the music. The dancers continue circling until the stage is arrived at when the entire arena is a seething mass of bodies



The Khattak Dance

swaying and dancing to the haunting music. The excitement frequently passes from the dancers to the spectators who will often join in.

Years ago, in the "Bangara", each dancer carried a sword and shield. The shield has now been discarded. At the beginning of the dance the swords are placed on the ground. When the music starts the men pick up their swords, form a circle and start dancing.

The movements are meant to symbolize hand to hand fighting. The dance gathers speed and after reaching its climax comes to a sudden stop. The performance then continues by the dancers coming out and displaying their skill in dancing with their swords, either individually or in pairs.

The "Balballa" is danced without swords. The dancers carrying handkerchiefs or sticks in their hands dance by quick spins and turning movements of the body. Here it is that we can see the difference in the dance performed according to the tribe. With the Mahsuds and the Wazirs the head movement is more pronounced and in this dance also individuals will break off to give solo or pair performances.

It should, perhaps, be mentioned that the ban on carrying swords is no longer effective. The swords now used in this dance are ritualistic and used only for this purpose.

What makes these dances so fascinating to watch, apart from the dancing, is the variety of costume worn. In the village the normal dress will consist of a loose shirt and baggy trousers with all sorts of coloured and embroidered waistcoats. A few years ago the colour and design of the waistcoats was very important, but this item of dress is now going out of fashion and is hardly seen at all. On the other hand flashy shirts and trousers are today worn by the professional dancers.

In both kinds of dance there are a number of variations and the dances can go on for sometimes as long as an hour. The whole spectacle, with the movements of the shields and sticks, the use of the

swords, the swaying of the dancers and the martial music, instils into the performers and spectators happy feelings of vigour and contentment. It is a splendid dance by a fine people.

7

The Punjab Today

LAHORE is the capital of West Pakistan and a much more important place than in those days when Lord Roberts and his men marched through.

On the Grand Trunk Road, midway between Jhelum and Peshawar, stands the city of Rawalpindi and six miles to the north-west is the site which has been chosen for the new capital of all Pakistan.

As has already been mentioned the Punjab was for many years known as the "garden of India". It is a region which is intensely fertile and which produces great quantities of grain, sugar, cotton, and fruit. Miles and miles of it are well irrigated and in some places oranges and lemons grow so large that it is difficult to hold one in the hand.

From the journeys that we have already made it will be realized that the majority of the population of West Pakistan live there. In the north-west area the population is sparse and as we eventually travel south through Baluchistan and Sind there are even fewer people to be seen. Nevertheless the population of the country as a whole is increasing by nearly two millions a year, and in a country so new and without many natural resources, the problem of food is all

important. A nation whatever its size has to be fed, and in the last ten years there have been unfortunate periods of food shortage. With the great increase in population the imports of food have risen alarmingly,



The walls of Lahore in Lord Roberts' time

and in Pakistan where there are no natural commodities which can be sold for foreign exchange, such as oil and precious metal, it becomes absolutely essential that steps should be taken to produce at home as much food as possible.

We have seen how in the past land management was inefficient and out of date. Clearly if a country is going to produce more food it is essential the whole farming outlook should be modernized and brought up to date, so that food for its population can be

provided at home and industries can be created to help the internal workings of the country's government. This means factories must be built which provide, amongst other things, agricultural machinery and artificial fertilizers, while others are built for the processing of cotton and jute. This has been done because in all these cases foreign exchange had originally to be spent in order to import fertilizers and machinery, or cotton and jute had to be sent elsewhere to be processed.

One thing is quite certain that if you cannot feed the population a country cannot prosper. It was obvious that steps had to be taken at once to improve the natural farming potential of the Punjab. Improvement of farming isn't only a question of land and crops. It is also necessary to improve the breeds of farm animals, horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry. To some extent the problem was made more difficult in the Punjab because in that region was the concentration of population. It wasn't possible for adventurous people to go off into the desert wastes and start a farm. The money required to bring into cultivation the waste lands of Pakistan is enormous and quite beyond the capabilities or resources of any individual. It is an entirely different problem from the farming position in Europe. Throughout that continent farming has been in progress for centuries. For hundreds of years land has been cultivated and most important of all there has never been any shortage of water.

In the Punjab, as we have seen, the Pakistanis have to face the appalling problems of waterlogging and

salt. We know the government is tackling the matter, but it is also one which takes a very long time.

Nevertheless the government has approached the agricultural problem of the Punjab in a realistic way. Education has helped enormously and the added increase of irrigation has made a big difference.

Wherever we go in the Punjab we can see the results of modernization. We can see how more water is being obtained from newly sunk wells and dams, being built for the purposes of preserving river water. With this and new systems of drainage there is no doubt that there will be a vast increase in farm production. However, one of the great resources of Pakistan is their working population, but it is essential if progress is going to be made that the people who work on the farms should be better educated as well as being helped financially.

So let us go to Lahore again and see if we can find out what is being done.

Much of the city, of course, remains unchanged since the days of Lord Roberts. On the other hand there have been a number of improvements. Many of the streets are now paved. There are adequate water supplies and good drainage. There is modern sanitation and as we saw at Peshawar, the horse-drawn *gharries* now share the roads with modern cars and high-powered buses.

To improve education, the University of the Punjab has been greatly enlarged and extended. It was, in fact, founded shortly after Lord Roberts was there. But of recent years a college of commerce has been founded within it and there are now fifty-four

colleges affiliated to it, of which nineteen are in the city itself. The number of students in 1960 was nearly twenty-three thousand. Since 1947 there has been a very rapid increase in both the fields of industry and agriculture, and what is, perhaps, the greatest advance of all is the fact that nearly four thousand women and girls were at the University in 1960. This is probably the greatest step forward in the Far East that has been made for centuries.

For many years women and girls took no part in public affairs; their lives being solely domestic. But in 1949 the All Pakistan Women's Association was established and this aims at advancing the welfare of women throughout the entire country. With its headquarters in Lahore, the Association's activities include rural reconstruction, educational and health programmes, welfare, and the provision of advice and assistance to the poor. There is no doubt that with the more active participation of women in the life of the country the general modernization of life in the villages and rural areas has come a long way.

We all know the great help which is given by women and girls on the farms in our own country and it is certain that with the improvement of women's status in Pakistan the benefit will soon be found in farming.

As has already been said the improvement of livestock is essential to efficient farming, and here again we can see a big advance in Lahore. For in the city is now held the National Horse and Cattle Show, the object of which is to give the people some idea of the

country's cattle and to interest them in improved methods of animal breeding.

In Britain we have always had a great reputation for our fine farm animals. Our cattle, pigs and sheep cannot be excelled anywhere. But in a country like Pakistan where farming has been backward for so long, a tremendous amount still remains to be done, and it is shows of this sort which will do so much to effect that improvement.

We must also remember that in Pakistan a great deal of transport still depends on cattle, horses and mules and a careful selection and improvement of horses is also an essential part of the economy. Good, healthy livestock is always a sign of flourishing farming and this again is very often a matter of education and, of course, veterinary science.

Lahore and the Punjab have indeed come a long way since the old days of camel convoys and bullock carts.

Let us now leave Lahore by the old Grand Trunk Road for Rawalpindi, for here a great project is about to be started which will, to some extent, alter the character of the entire region.

When Pakistan came into existence in 1947 the new government had to find a capital city. Unlike India there was no city like Delhi, which had for a long time been the seat of the government. To begin with Karachi was chosen. Karachi was chosen fourteen years ago because it was a good port, but it was never intended to be a permanent capital. There was an existing airport, and of all the cities in the new country, Karachi had more temporary buildings left over from the war than any other. Of course, there

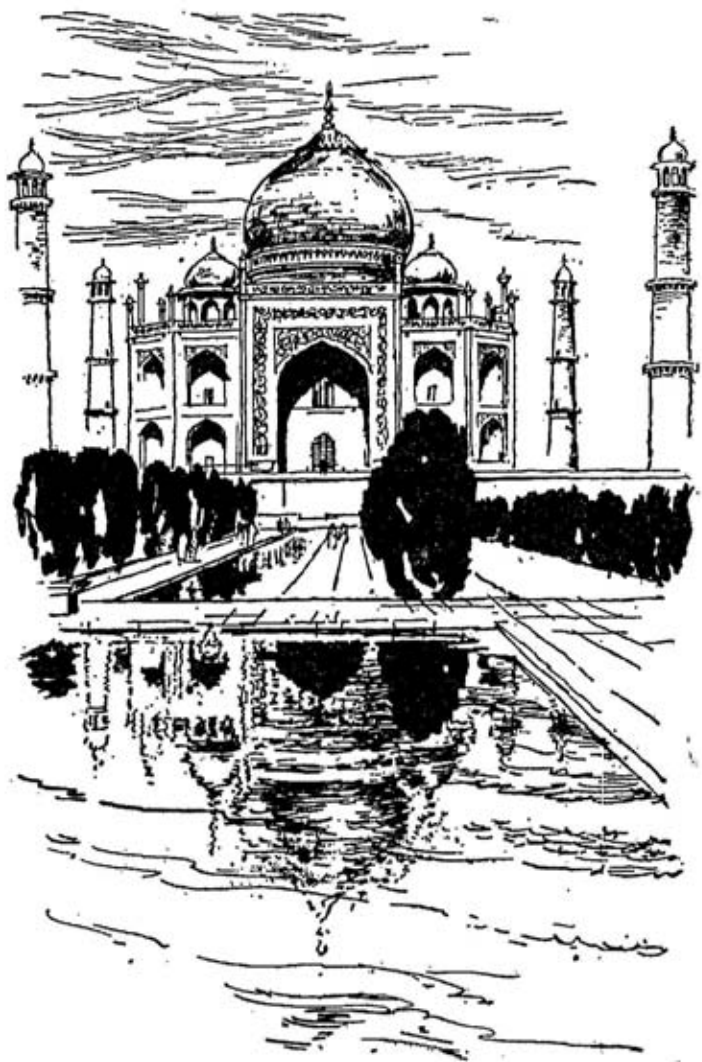
has always been the difficulty that Pakistan is divided into two parts separated by over one thousand miles, so that wherever you put the capital it is going to be a very long way from the other part of the country.

But there are always a large number of matters to be considered before it is decided which city or town shall become the capital of a new country.

In India, Delhi had for centuries been the Mogul capital, although after the British conquest the seat of government had for a long time been at Calcutta, finally moving back to Delhi after the beautiful, fine new city had been built from the plans by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Nowhere in Pakistan was there a city comparable to Delhi or Calcutta, or even Bombay. Nowhere in Pakistan was there a city with fine buildings and although Karachi may have been temporarily convenient, it was stuck out at the end of one part of the country, right at the end of a vast expanse of desert waste. Also its climate was far from being pleasant.

There is another aspect which has to be considered. In many of the older countries throughout the world there are fine and beautiful capital cities. People travel to England, France and Italy because they want to see London, Paris and Rome. In these great cities there are magnificent public buildings, fine processional streets, magnificent churches and cathedrals as well as other places of great historic interest. There are art galleries, museums and cultural centres which all add to the importance of a city. All in their own way are important when considering the status of a new country. Pakistan as a new nation had no such



The Taj Mahal

city, so instead of trying to make one out of an existing town they decided, wisely, to start from the beginning and build a new capital.

Shortly after the present government came into existence a Commission was appointed to consider Karachi and if it was thought to be unsuitable then to recommend a new site. We have already mentioned the climate of Karachi, but amongst other considerations there is the question of the surrounding countryside, the communications and, perhaps, most important of all, certainly in Pakistan, the question of water.

If you ever go to India you may one day visit Agra to see the fabulous Taj Mahal, that quite beautiful building on the banks of the river Jumna, built in 1719 by Shah Jehan in memory of his very lovely wife. What is perhaps even more interesting is that a few miles from Agra stand the remains of the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri. It was a fine example of Mogul architecture, having been built at the orders of the Emperor Akbar. But it is also, perhaps, the classic example of lack of forethought in planning a city. This incredible city was, in fact, never occupied, and is probably the only city in the world that has fallen into decay without a single human being ever having lived in it. All this happened because there wasn't any water and nobody had thought about that essential until it was too late.

When the Pakistan Commission decided against Karachi as the capital they chose a site near Rawalpindi and, that having been approved, plans were prepared. At the same time every single factor was

carefully considered and thought about, not only for the immediate building of the city, but its future development and extension.

The name of the new city will be Islamabad. It will be built north of Rawalpindi in an area which is the end of the main Indus plain. The site is some two thousand feet above sea level, although to the northern end the hills rise sharply to well over five thousand feet. Between the valleys of these hills runs the river Soan with its three tributaries of which the Kurang is the most important. It is upon this river, about nine miles away, that the great Rawal dam is being built. This will create a vast reservoir which will, in due course, provide much of the water for the new city.

The idea is that not only shall a city be built, but the whole surrounding neighbourhood shall be controlled and designated into specific areas. For instance there will be the city itself, which will include the National Park, beyond which will be resort areas and immediately surrounding these will be the rural districts. In the city centre will be the Government buildings. The National Park will provide facilities for sport, with cultural and educational buildings. In the town area will be the Presidential Palace, the Parliament and High Court buildings. The diplomatic area containing the Embassies and Consulates will be built along the Murree highway to the north-east. It will lie to the south-east of the administrative zone and a green belt of trees and shrubs will run along this highway to separate the new capital from Rawalpindi.

Also in this area light industries will be developed: but heavy industry, factories and warehouses, will remain at Rawalpindi. As has been mentioned, water in the first instance will be supplied from the Rawal reservoir. This source will be adequate for the first five or six years, but as the development of the area proceeds further dams will be built. The biggest of these will be the Cheerah dam which will be at the northern end of the development site.

Whilst great attention has been paid to the layout and architecture of the proposed city, it will also contain modern and new ideas for the control of traffic and pedestrians. There will be certain highways which will be confined to fast moving traffic and here provision will be made for pedestrians to cross over or under at given points. Though the whole project will cost a vast amount of money it will proceed by stages so that every phase will be complete on its own. In this way there will be no ugly gaps, nor will there be the impression that it is a site being developed piecemeal. As it proceeds it will never appear unsightly, for one thing is certain, Pakistan is not building "just another city", but a capital which will in due course take its rightful place as one of the great cities of the world.

It is interesting to note that in the year 1961 many of the government's civil servants had already moved to Rawalpindi from Karachi and in this year Pakistan received a tremendous amount of financial assistance from Great Britain, the United States, and the World Bank.

The World Bank was founded at the end of 1945.

It is part of the United Nations Organization and has the complicated official name of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Bank was established to assist the improvement of member countries after the second world war. There were provisions to assist in the investment of money to help the under-developed countries and to provide loans for similar purposes. Some of its aims are also to assist generally in the growth of international trade and to encourage production throughout the world. Loans are made and since the Bank was founded these have amounted to nearly five thousand million dollars.

8

Quetta and Karachi

AFTER leaving Peshawar we will pass through Kohat and then on to Bannu, during which time we have been steadily descending, leaving the great mountain heights behind us at the Khyber. We will also pass the great Suleiman Mountain ranges part of which run through Waziristan and form a natural barrier between Baluchistan and Afghanistan.

As we move further south we enter the valley of the Kurram river, which flows past Bannu into the river Indus. Thereafter we find ourselves in a stony desert, frozen in winter, burnt black with heat in summer and with nothing in it for miles except an odd oasis of a few palm trees and possibly here and there a little water. All that can be seen are hundreds of miles of sand and scrub, mostly covered with stones and boulders and generally uninhabited. The sand will frequently have been swept by the wind into a series of great ridges and generally the entire area is empty of any sort of vegetation except at the rare oases. Occasionally, if travelling in summer it becomes necessary to cross an empty bed of a stream, for in these areas only the great river Indus has water in it in the summer. But quite often round the

empty streams the ground is a little more fertile and many small, dwarf palms will be seen. In the past this tree has been a great standby to the villagers in this part of the world. The great fan-like leaves are made into matting from which they construct their



Pollinating palm trees

houses and the tree's fibre is made into ropes. This fibre and the leaves are also used for making a primitive sort of shoe.

As we move on we will leave the desert to descend into more fertile valleys or climb up into the mountain passes where we will get a wonderful view of the surrounding country. From the mountain heights we

will see the odd village, very like the villages which have already been described, although even in these very vast areas there are signs of progress and civilization. In the oases are the palm trees and the date groves and we may, if we are lucky, see the villagers climbing the trees to pollinate the flowers.

Throughout the whole area there is very little rainfall, but there are strange sights to be seen because frequently the valleys appear to be terraced with tiers of slate and rock, going sometimes half way up the mountains, which would certainly indicate that in the past there was a great deal more rain than there is at the present time.

In the spring the valleys will be masses of lilies, yellow broom, dandelions and scarlet anemones. Again if you are lucky, you may see large areas of wild hyacinths and you are almost certain to see plenty of wild garlic.

Throughout the entire journey from Peshawar to Quetta that is the sort of countryside we shall see. It varies little, but as we approach Quetta the climate is quite different from Peshawar. For in the whole of Pakistan the town of Quetta is a place which is dreadfully hot in summer and very cold in winter with frequently large falls of snow.

Quetta is some five hundred and fifty miles from Karachi. It lies in a small fertile plain in the middle of the Baluchistan mountains. Like many other towns and cities in Pakistan it has a history going back for centuries. It has been held at various times by the Ghoris, the Mongols and by the fifteenth century was under the rule of the Governor of Herat, a town

which now lies in Persia. Thereafter it was conquered by the Moguls and for many years it provided men and money for the armies of the Emperor Akbar.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century it was almost continuously a battleground between the Afghans and the surrounding tribes, and this continued more or less until the completion of Lord Roberts' march to Kabul, when as a result of the subjection of the Afghans certain areas of Baluchistan came under British rule. Quetta was occupied finally by the British in 1879.

Since that date, until Pakistan became Independent, Quetta became increasingly important as an outpost of British military power. It became a great training centre and a Staff College was inaugurated there in 1908. Its importance can, perhaps, be best realized if you read the names of some of the famous soldiers who were at the College, either as students or as instructors. Field-Marshal Montgomery was there, so were Field-Marshal Auchinleck and Slim, and the President of Pakistan, Field-Marshal Ayub Khan, is one of its most distinguished past students.

Quetta is the capital city of Baluchistan. It came into prominence because the British realized its strategical importance in their quarrels with Afghanistan. Only six years before Lord Roberts' march to Kabul a British soldier, Robert Sandeman, had realized the city's position. He knew that so long as the British owned Quetta they could control the whole of the southern half of what is now Pakistan, and what is perhaps more important they could control the trade routes to Southern Afghanistan.

Consequently as time went on and the problems of the North-West Frontier became more intense, Quetta increased in importance. Apart from the Staff College, which has already been mentioned, the town had become a great military centre. Like all Indian cities of those days it covered a large area of about six miles and was divided by two great ditches, or river beds, which are called "Nullahs". These in summer time are completely dry, but can be raging torrents in winter. Again like all Indian towns many of the roads were commemorative of great British names. There were Bruce Road, Lytton Road and Queens Road and as usual the city itself was divided very much between the military and civil side, and of course, between the Indian and British population.

As a military station over 12,000 troops were posted there, which in 1935 made it the largest military station in the Indian Empire. It was an important place, because in those days Britain was still wondering whether Russia might not invade India. If she did Quetta would soon be in the front line.

On the 31 May 1935 the weather was delightful. It was always warm at that time of the year, but still not warm enough for people to sleep out of doors. It was the month when many people arrived in Quetta from the hot areas and as usual at that time the population had increased by some twenty thousand.

In England we are fortunate in not having extremes of climate, we do not suffer the natural disasters which occur from time to time in other parts of the



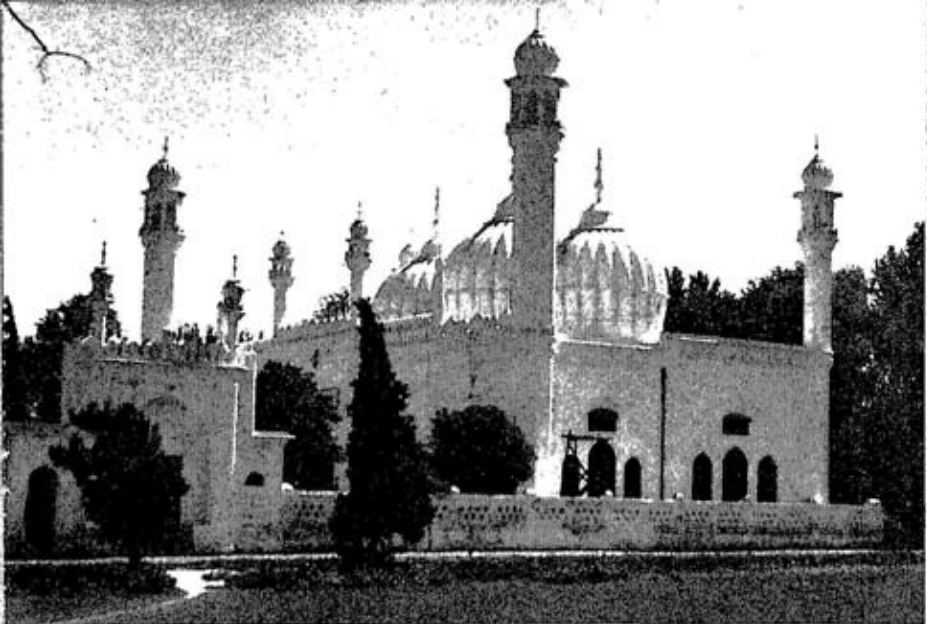
Clifton Parade on the sea front at Karachi



Frere Hall, Karachi, now the Pakistan National Museum

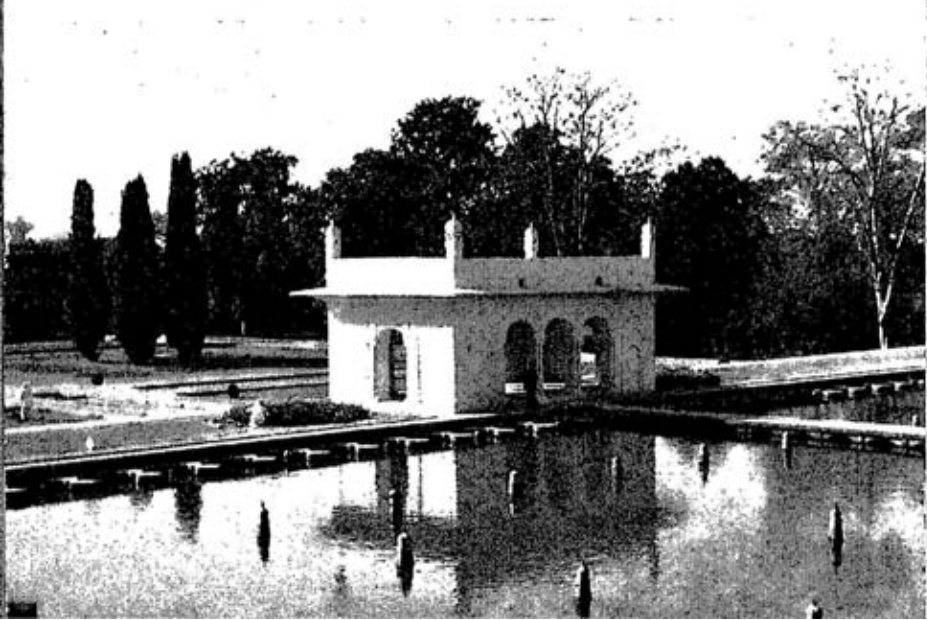


The Qissakhwani Bazaar at Peshawar



(Above) A Mosque at Peshawar

(Below) The Shalimar Gardens at Lahore



world, usually in the tropical climates. Earthquakes, volcano eruptions, monsoons and typhoons are unknown to us. But in the Far East such things occur frequently and Quetta had had its share of earthquakes already. Only four years before the gaol forty miles away had been demolished by a severe earth tremor and the shock had reached the city and damaged a number of buildings.

But on that day in May there was no suggestion that by the next day one of the great disasters of the world would have struck the city of Quetta. At three o'clock in the morning a terrible earthquake occurred. The earth roared and shook over an area of seventy miles long and sixteen miles wide. The surface opened and a great deal of the city was engulfed. In thirty seconds more than 40,000 people had been killed. Quetta as a city known to thousands of British soldiers had disappeared.

As so often happens some good came out of the tragedy, because when the city was rebuilt new buildings were erected which were earthquake proof. This doesn't mean that if the earth opens the building still stands. What it does mean is that where there are severe earth tremors, owing to new methods of construction involving a considerable amount of give in the foundations, the buildings will probably not fall down. It is the collapse of large buildings which causes such terrible loss of life. This sort of damage was well illustrated in the bombing of cities which occurred in the second world war.

The city is much like many of the other cities we have seen, and it is highly industrialized. Silk

embroidery is produced in large quantities and the manufacture of rugs and felt is increasing rapidly. Copperwork is also now being produced and some of it is so good that it is rivalling in quality that which had been made hitherto only in Peshawar.

The valley of Quetta is very fertile and produces large quantities of fruit and vegetables. There are many orchards and vineyards and irrigation is carried out from a series of underground canals and a number of wells.

The city itself is sharply divided into two parts, one of which is the commercial and shopping area, the other being devoted almost entirely to the military. The whole region is very rich in minerals; and coal, iron ore, copper, lead and salt are produced.

All the way from Peshawar to Quetta agriculture is, of course, the main occupation, but a great deal has been done since the days of Lord Roberts. Whereas in those days hundreds and hundreds of miles were nothing but desert wastes, large areas have now been reclaimed. Although, as has already been told, far too much of the land in the north is still affected by waterlogging and salt saturation. What is perhaps alarming is the fact that over a hundred thousand acres every year are badly affected in this way. In an effort to stop this loss a Soil Reclamation Board has been created. The Board helps farmers with their rotation of crops and by providing surface drainage. It also controls experimental farms for the purpose of studying and demonstrating modern techniques. In the Quetta area alone great sums of money have also been spent in plant breeding for the production

of better seeds. Around Quetta there has been a great improvement in pasture in an area covering over two hundred thousand acres, whilst a considerable sum of money is now being spent on the improvement and planting of forests. The area planted with forest trees has more than doubled itself in ten years and every year sees more acres of desert waste being brought into cultivation. Nevertheless it is one continual battle with the forces of nature; man is just winning, but only just!

Now we must be on our way for the last part of the journey and this time we are going by train through Khaipur and across the Sind Desert to the capital. So let us make our way to the railway station to join a train of the North Western Railway, for a railway journey in the Far East is always something of an adventure.

Throughout Pakistan there are three gauges of railway line. Roughly speaking they are referred to as the broad gauge, the metre gauge and the "other" gauge. In Lord Roberts' day the railways of the Indian sub-continent were in their early stages, and somewhat primitive. That pattern of travel persisted for many years, and it is only recently that this has altered. Let us look at the situation of twenty years ago and then see what improvements have been made.

Wherever you travelled in the sub-continent made little difference, for although there had been some electrification generally speaking most of the engines were steam. They were large and impressive to look at for they had to travel vast distances. The tracks

wended their way over the desert land and the journeys, whether of a short distance or long, took considerable time because of the great number of wayside stations at which the train stopped. The carriages varied tremendously. There were a number of classes, the lowest of which was something worse than the ordinary cattle truck in England. The first class also varied considerably and depended to some extent on whether you were in a modern coach or an old one. If you were lucky it would be big, airy, roomy and air-conditioned. There would be a lavatory and a shower partitioned off from the compartment and you might have it to yourself or possibly share it with one other person. If it was not air-conditioned it would be liberally supplied with fans and there would be blinds and gauzes over the windows to keep out the glare of the sun, the sand and dust. There would be one or two bed racks which would be used for sitting or lying on during the day and which would be made up into a bed at night.

The carriages were quite different from those we know in England, each first class carriage being completely self-contained and in these trains there were no corridors. First class travel was comfortable and pleasant. Anything else being overcrowded, hot, smelly and frequently vermin infested.

The stations of the big cities are generally speaking very fine, modern buildings with spacious halls, modern offices and good restaurants. They were not infrequently on several floors with usually the restaurant on the first.

Travelling down the scale of stations you would

arrive eventually at a wayside village station consisting of little more than one rickety hut. On our journey we can see several of these and be able to look for ourselves at the life of the countryside around these stations and the excitement which happens once a day when the big express arrives.

At the moment our train is in Quetta station waiting to start. So let us walk down the platform; as soon as we do that we shall see in the lower class compartments the passengers are packed like sardines. Travel in the lowest class is comparatively cheap. It has to be because even today, with the great improvements that have taken place in the country, the national average income is still very low. Twenty years ago the majority of people were poverty stricken. In the lower class compartments the passengers would each have several bundles with them, one of which would contain food for the journey. Another a blanket or rug of some sort which could be wrapped round the passenger at night. There is no question of lying down, you sleep where you sit or stand. In the first class carriages the luggage goes into the compartment with the passenger, but he would be unlikely to be carrying his own food. That would be unnecessary for him; although there are no corridors the train stops at certain settled times each day when those who wished to could leave their compartments and walk along the track to a restaurant car where they would eat and return to their own carriage perhaps an hour or so later.

As the journey starts we leave Quetta and go

through the Bolan Pass on our way to Khaipur. We pass through the Mastung Valley which is rich and fertile; here dotted all along the line are a series of small villages whose narrow lanes can be seen from the train. The tall village houses are constructed mostly of mud, but with delightful creepers and trailing, scented flowers all over them.

Throughout the entire journey, every mile or so we pass herds of goats and flocks of sheep tended by their shepherds and always on the move for fresh grazing grounds.

From time to time we stop at a small wayside station, where the clamour and noise is loud and shrill. There is no platform as we understand it at home, but where the train stops there will be a milling crowd of several hundreds. At the corner of the station hut a snake charmer may be sitting tootling on his pipes, where if we wait long enough, we may see the great head of the cobra uncoiling itself from the basket in front of the musician. Further on we may see another travelling showman and he will be putting on his set piece which is a fight between a snake and a mongoose. Everywhere there will be fruit sellers and strange-looking men offering mugs of thick brown liquid which they hopefully call tea. Others will be selling hot, rich and spicy sweetmeats, so liked by all the Eastern races. There will be the inevitable beggar, often deformed and bent, and calling loudly for alms, whilst up at the front of the train the fireman will have probably got down from the engine to chase away the monkeys which have gathered chattering and screaming on the

line. As one of the station officials clangs a mighty bell hanging in front of his hut to send on the train, the parrots and parakeets on the roof set up a screeching which echoes in our ears as the train sets off on its way to the Sind Desert.

The North Western Railway crosses the upper Sind frontier at Jacobabad. It then runs through Khaipur, the capital town of one of the Princely States in Pakistan. It then turns south through the Sind Desert, the Thar Desert, and passes through Hyderabad, completing its journey at Karachi. In this part of our journey the train passes through some of the hottest country in the world.

At Khaipur the railway crosses the reaches of the lower Indus and although a considerable amount of irrigation is now taking place, the whole region is practically rainless. The winters are cold, but the summers are intensely hot. In its lower reaches the Indus has no large tributaries and in summer the amount of water in the river is considerably reduced because there is no other source of supply into the river in this area.

To the east of the river and along the railway line is the Desert of Thar. Here there is only an occasional oasis and the desert stretches across the frontier with India where it adjoins the Rajput States. One of the problems of the lower Indus valley and the Thar Desert, is that the earth is so hot that the south-western monsoon when it approaches will frequently pass over without leaving a drop of rain. In consequence the land is entirely dependent upon such water as can be obtained from the river.

Right down to the coastline of the Arabian Sea the delta of the great river resembles a low plain with here and there mangrove swamps dotted along the seaward edge. There are vast areas of tall reeds and grass growing right up to the banks of the river, which frequently make it difficult for the traveller who wants to see the river. Nevertheless the entire area is being tackled as an immediate problem in order to reclaim more and more land for agricultural purposes, but it must be a very long term project.

As the train travels south of Hyderabad we see the area of the great Rann lying slightly above coast level and full of mangrove swamps. To the east of the railway is desert rising up into rows of long sand-hills, with here and there rocky cliffs. Round the valley of the Indus lie several fertile plains where there is some farming activity, although these plains are interspersed with areas of loose sand and rock outcrop which make cultivation difficult.

Towards the southern and eastern end of the Rann are great salt wastes covering many hundreds of square miles. The Great Rann lies to the north and the Little Rann to the south-east. Here, near to the coast line, there is on occasions some rainfall, which may be heavy and does cause flooding from time to time. When these flood waters subside they leave the surface of the earth covered with a crust of fine shingle and salt. As the hot sun bakes the ground to a hard, concrete-like surface, it is practically impossible to look on this ground because of the dazzling whiteness produced by the reflection of the sun. It is

impossible in such places to grow anything and here once more there is a very serious problem.

In the hot season there is no growth or vegetation of any sort to be seen. There are practically no signs of life except an occasional camel caravan wending its weary way north. Otherwise there are no birds to be seen and no animal life. In fact a land without life or vegetation which is, of course, very dull, dreary and unexciting, and very different from the rest of the country through which we have been travelling.

So the train moves on towards the end of our journey to Karachi, a city which has altered out of all recognition in the last few years. Nevertheless Karachi is a great city and is also in some ways similar to other cities of the East and as we arrive there let us look and see what is our first impression.

Karachi is a mixture of east and west. As one leaves the station and approaches the centre of this great city one cannot help but realize that east and west are inextricably mixed.

A vast teeming population, a lot of smells peculiar to the East, the shouting and screaming of bullock cart drivers, the clanking of old cars, the smooth running of modern high-powered buses and sleek limousines give an extraordinary picture of a mixed up conglomeration of old and new and east and west. Many people are to be seen dressed in expensive European clothes, whilst at the same time a vast number of the people are very poorly dressed indeed.

In the days of the old Indian Empire, Karachi was a small port on the Arabian Sea, standing slightly to the west of the silted up mouths of the river Indus.

It had a reasonably accessible harbour, although shipping could have difficulties when the south-west monsoon was at its most violent. Nevertheless in those days it was regarded as an important port because the railway brought much of the produce from the Punjab there for export. Today apart from the immediate vicinity of the Indus valley the area to the south and west is still a barren desert.

The ancient history of the city is practically unknown. Attempts have been made to identify it with a town called Korkaikai, which existed some three hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ. There is no doubt that the ancient Egyptians travelled at various times across the Indian Ocean, and it is also probable that when the first Moslem invaders of India marched through the Khyber Pass a number of them landed by sea at the same time. It is probable and more than likely that these landings took place at a little village which lay close to the mouth of the mighty river Indus. In the eighteenth century it was a small fishing village. It was at that period, when it was under the control of the rulers of Sind, that its value as a commercial harbour was first recognized. Today it is Karachi.

The Sind rulers were not the only people who were aware of its possibilities, for at the same time the British were already exploring the area and before long they had entered into a treaty with the Emir of Sind which opened up the Indus for navigation, and then in 1830 the British Navy sailed in and occupied the village for the first time.

Shortly after this one of the great characters in

British Indian history arrived on the scene in the person of Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of the Sind. It is interesting to read in the General's biography that "it is difficult to picture Karachi as it must have looked in 1842. It was just a hamlet of mud houses in a desert of rock and salty sand whose white glare was painful to the eyes."

Since that time Sir Charles Napier can well be said to have been the founder of modern Karachi. There are many public buildings and roads which still bear his name and it was always his ambition to make Karachi one of the greatest cities in the East. Today it is obvious that his ambition has finally been achieved. He was responsible for the building of the lighthouse and the mole, and he also linked the city with the Indus, using an old watercourse as the original village had not been built on any of the mouths of the river forming the delta.

With Independence in 1947 Karachi became the temporary capital of Pakistan. It was then a city of some half million people. In the space of about fourteen years the population increased to more than two million. With this increase there has been a tremendous expansion not only of the city, and its buildings, but also of industry and commerce. Large factories have been built at Landhi, which lies fifteen miles to the east, and also to the north-west in the Sind industrial trading estate. These industrial regions now produce a great variety of goods including cotton, woollens, hosiery, plastics, as well as a number of food items and a large range of engineering appliances.

Before we have a closer look at the city let us for a moment or two consider the man who was principally responsible for the creation of Pakistan. Mr. Mahomed Ali Jinnah was born in Karachi and died there just a year after Pakistan had come into being. He had been educated as a young man at Bombay University and went to London and became a barrister at Lincoln's Inn. He returned to India and practised his profession, but at the same time took a very active part in the All India Moslem League. His ambition thereafter had been the creation of a separate Moslem State away from India. Unfortunately he was a very sick man when this was finally achieved. Nevertheless it is his ideals which have been kept in the foreground when the development of Pakistan has proceeded since those days. There is now a magnificent memorial to Mr. Jinnah in the city, the foundation stone of which was laid by the President in 1960.

Modern Karachi is a fine city with many wide streets and large, pleasant residential areas. Side by side with fine buildings, are many temporary shacks, because the city has had for years a refugee problem to deal with. When Independence came many Moslem refugees left for Pakistan. They moved in from Hindu India, carrying their meagre possessions but having little money and, of course, no job. These are problems which are bound to arise when new States are created and Pakistan is by no means alone in this respect. Israel has perhaps had an even greater problem.

Nevertheless in Karachi it is a problem which has

been tackled realistically and resettlement areas are appearing all round the city. The idea is that they should be built near industry and the factories, and that each community should be self-contained, having its own shopping centre, schools and so on. In these communities everyday services are being provided and heat, light and water will be found in all the resettlement areas. Now the city itself has a university, twenty-two colleges, fifty secondary schools and two hundred and forty primary.

In our tour round let us see some of the sights which help to make Karachi one of the great cities of the Orient.

When we first started talking about Lord Roberts' journey to Kabul we saw the problems and difficulties the pioneer explorers in the old days had to contend with. We saw that primitive travel and lack of communications delayed the better administration of far off territories, that the old adventurers had many problems to face. Nowadays we all know the situation is quite different. We can speak to the other side of the world by telephone. We can even see on our television screens events which are happening at that moment thousands of miles away. We can travel round the world within a matter of a few hours, and air travel today is as popular and common as horse carriages and bicycles were sixty years ago. With the increase in air traffic great airports have become as necessary as great harbours were in the old days. Those of you who have seen London Airport will understand what I mean.

The civil airport of Karachi is probably the most

important airport in Asia, although for some years after Independence the national airline underwent a number of problems which so often beset new ventures.

Within the last few years the teething troubles have been overcome. Pakistan International Airways was the first Asian airline to operate a jet service between Karachi and London. Today you can travel from the frost and cold of England's winter to the warm sunshine of Pakistan in less than nine hours! It took Lord Roberts twelve weeks, and thirty years before that it would have taken twelve months.

The whole business of aviation has undergone a remarkable change in Pakistan in the last few years. Improved services and increased efficiency have turned losses into profit. With the increased speed of the modern jet the airport itself has been extended to keep up with this development. A new eleven-thousand-foot runway was completed in January 1961 and the airport now handles monthly more than three thousand aircraft and thirty thousand passengers. Every latest device is provided to assist pilots in taking off and landing in every sort of weather and there is a new high intensity lighting system as well as new and efficient drainage to prevent flooding.

We all know how important punctuality is. From time to time we complain because the train is late or the coach has kept us waiting. There is no doubt that in the past this has always been a failing of many Eastern countries. It is the overcoming of this weakness which has done much to put the Pakistan airways on a sound commercial basis. They have broken

all records for punctuality, both for arrival and departure. Their figures within this field are a great deal better than many other airlines throughout the world. Many of their routes, of course, are between East and West Pakistan, but there are also several flights to Kashmir and to India, and if you want to



Transport old and new

study the geography and countryside of Kashmir there is no better way than to travel from, for instance, Rawalpindi up to Gilgit and Skardu. As well as many internal airlines throughout the sub-continent today Pakistan Airlines fly to all parts of the world.

Here you will see from above right up to the Kashmir border the contours of the country, the

valleys with their rivers, the mountains with their streams. For the aircraft fly right between the great mountain peaks, where a second or two off their course could mean disaster. It is on a flight of this nature that you can really see the country, because looking from high you can gain an impression as if you were looking down on a map. And on these flights, of which there are over a thousand a year, you can see some of the greatest mountains in the world in the Himalayas.

Camel convoys to jet planes! Lord Roberts' journey in 1878 would have been very different if he had had all the aids that a modern army possesses today. He would probably have flown to Kabul and back in a few days. One thing is certain, however, he wouldn't have learned much of the country nor would he even have had a chance of knowing the people.

Until 1880 the port of Karachi was managed by the Government of Bombay, and during the later part of Queen Victoria's reign considerable improvements were effected which included the deepening and widening of the main channel. Large new wharves and warehouses were built and by the year 1912 more wheat was exported from Karachi than from any other port of the British Empire. Again since Pakistan came into being considerable rebuilding has been undertaken with greatly increased facilities, with the result that in the last ten years the harbour traffic has doubled to what is now the large total of four and a half million tons a year.

With the port is a shipyard for the construction of

new ships. It lies in the west wharf area and has sidings linking it with the railway of the entire country.

One of the most notable public buildings in the city is the Frere Hall. It was originally used as the Town Hall and was built in 1865. It is a relic of the old days of British occupation and facing the main entrance is a statue of Queen Victoria. At the rear, in the delightful gardens stands the Baluch regimental memorial. When Karachi became the capital Frere Hall ceased to be the Town Hall, but it is now perhaps a building of even greater importance, because it is the National Museum and has a magnificent collection of ancient manuscripts, writings and treasures of the old Indus civilization.

Climatically Karachi is very hot in summer and even in the winter the temperature seldom falls below fifty degrees. Because of its climate it is not easy to work in, but it has become a modern city in the best sense of the word. Many of the new buildings are air-conditioned and whereas in the old days water was a continual problem, new schemes have been put into operation which now provide the city, not only with a thoroughly modern water supply, but a sound and effective drainage scheme as well.

Soon Karachi will no longer be the capital of Pakistan, but it will always remain a great industrial centre and one of the more important cities of the Far East.

Here, then, we end our journey. In the throbbing city of Karachi we leave Pakistan, knowing that since

Independence this Sovereign State has moved very quickly into its stride. The people are intelligent, virile and friendly and we extend to them our sincere hopes for their future peace and prosperity.

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